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ABSTRACT

This report is the final report of a comparative study of the teaching and learning of writing in the United Kingdom and the United States, consisting of observational studies of 4 pairs of classrooms which exchanged writing between the 2 countries over a 2-year period. Following an overview in chapter 1, chapter 2 describes the study's methods. Chapters 3-6 contain case studies of the 4 pairs of classes engaged in the study, with each of these chapters devoted to one pair, and with each case pointing to contrasts in the teaching and learning of writing in the 2 countries. Chapter 7 provides the synthesis across cases and the overall conclusions. Seventy-eight references and 6 appendixes (containing a discussion of the examination system in the United Kingdom, protocols for interviews with teachers and students, examples of responses to writing, guidelines for response letters, a newspaper article, and a journal article) conclude the report. (SR)

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ED334602

COMPARING THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF WRITING IN THE UNITED STATES AND THE UNITED KINGDOM: AUDIENCE EXCHANGES

FINAL REPORT

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Alex McLeod, Co-Researcher

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Teacher Participants and Collaborators:

1987-88

U.S.	*U.K.*
Joan Cone	Sue Llewellyn
Robin Davis	John Hickman
Judy Logan	Kate Chapman
Susan Reed	Irene Robertson
Nanette Koelsch	Hans Sjöström

1986-87

U.S.	*U.K.*
Keith Caldwell	Sue Llewellyn
Robin Davis	Jean Dunning
Charlene Delfino	Alex Moore
Judy Logan	Kate Chapman
Helen Ying	John Hickman

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FOREWORD

Ellie O'Sullivan and her students provided much of the inspiration for this project. In 1985 Ellie was involved in an exchange between her class at Fullham Cross School in London and a class taught by Hans Sjöström in Goteborg, Sweden. At that time Freedman was on sabbatical in London and McLeod arranged some school visits for her; Ellie O'Sullivan's classroom was one of several she visited. When Freedman entered O'Sullivan's class she observed students who were highly engaged as they tackled challenging and serious intellectual projects. Their level of commitment and achievement was indeed inspiring, with O'Sullivan's mixed-ability group of students showing exciting possibilities of what writing in school could be, as they wrote about such topics as their perceptions of differences in the kinds of books they read and the kinds of books the Swedish students read or as they made important discoveries about their own school curriculum when they wrote a book on their school for the Swedish students. When Freedman first initiated the idea of doing this comparative study, she immediately gravitated toward a writing exchange as a context for providing relatively parallel cross-cultural data about the teaching and learning of writing from varied perspectives (teachers', students', and outside observers') and for providing that data in an instructional context that O'Sullivan had shown had the potential to inspire students to do outstanding work. McLeod was enthusiastic about joining in because of his own past experience with cross-cultural writing exchanges (see McLeod, 1971) and his feelings about their unrealized potentials.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would first of all like to thank the teacher and student participants in the 1986-87 and 1987-88 exchanges; the teachers are listed on the title page. Without their ongoing collaboration and their taking the full responsibility of implementing the exchanges in their classrooms, this project would not have been possible. We thank them for teaching us what is involved in implementing an exchange, for varied kinds of students in varied kinds of settings. In both countries the teachers met every few months to share ideas and to support one another in solving problems. We also thank them for providing many of the ideas that are found in this report. Their intelligence and commitment are behind much of what you read here.

We would next like to thank Nanette Koelsch and Hans Sjöström, who participated fully in the second year exchange project, but whose story remains untold since that exchange was between Sweden and the United States; Hans was part of the exchange with Ellie O'Sullivan (see Foreword), and so his work with Nanette was organized to provide further inspiration of the possibilities of exchange work. We have not written about their exchange, since the project compares the United States and the United Kingdom. However, Nanette and Hans's work influenced much of what happened across all the exchanges.

After the exchange year and after working for a summer helping compile data, Nanette Koelsch entered graduate school and became in the later years of the project the primary research assistant, lending her expertise from her dual perspectives, as a teacher participant and as an observer of the other exchange classes. She has provided many important ideas that have found their way into this report and has also assumed the responsibility of reading and commenting on the final drafts of all chapters and helping with the difficult task of synthesizing the data. Her contributions have enriched this study in ways that cannot be measured.

Many others have lent their expertise as well. The U.S. research assistants are listed on the cover page but their more specific contributions must be noted. In particular, Claire Ramsey and Marcia Largent Corcoran helped collect much of the U.S. classroom data. Marcia worked in Judy Logan's and Robin Davis's classrooms (Chapters 3 and 4); Claire worked in Susan Reed's and Joan Cone's (Chapters 5 and 6). Claire and Marcia also conducted many of the student interviews in the classes they observed. Throughout the data collection period, they contributed important insights about the events occurring in the classroom, many of their ideas forming the foundation for later writing. Dennis Shannon helped compile and synthesize data for Susan Reed and Irene Robertson's exchange (Chapter 5). He also wrote excellent draft descriptions of Susan's school and its surroundings that remain in Chapter 5 in much the same form as he wrote them. Dennis also provided important comments on the evolving texts, especially of Chapters 5 and 6. In addition, he helped catalog the data, and as an expert editor, he has made many important suggestions about the writing of the manuscript. Christian Knoeller helped compile and synthesize data for Judy Logan and Kate Chapman's exchange (Chapter 3) and for Joan Cone and Sue Llewellyn's exchange (Chapter 6). He also contributed to early drafts of the background descriptions of Cone's and Logan's schools and provided a number of insights and suggestions for the evolving manuscript of Chapter 6. Christian also assisted Alex McLeod with his work on the British data when McLeod visited Berkeley from January through May, 1990. Finally, he catalogued the transcriptions of interviews and student writing on the computer. Kay Losey Fraser helped compile data for Judy Logan and Kate Chapman's exchange (Chapter 3), and provided many helpful comments about the other exchanges as well.

A number of research assistants joined the project to provide summer assistance. We are particularly grateful for the contributions of Kimberly Mitchell in Summer, 1988 on Chapter 6, and Regina Rodríguez on Chapter 4. In addition, we want to thank Ruth Forman for her help during Summer, 1989 on Chapter 6, especially for her insights into the role of rap music in the students'

writing. Gary Lichtenstein, a graduate student at Stanford University, volunteered his time during Summer, 1989, contributing his efforts to Chapter 3.

In London, Ellie O'Sullivan assisted Alex McLeod throughout the process of the exchange, taking responsibility for much of the data collection and the interviewing. In the planning stages her experience of having conducted a highly successful exchange with Hans Sjöström was very valuable for the teams in both countries. Beyond her successful experience running an exchange, her general resourcefulness and enthusiasm made her contribution special. In addition to helping with the planning, she attended all meetings of the U.K. teachers; her ideas and suggestions provided insights which were discussed in depth. She visited all the classes three or four times, discussing the exchange with the students as well as the teachers. Like Nanette, as a teacher participant in an exchange and as an observer of other exchanges, Ellie has provided many important insights.

We benefitted greatly from conversations with a number of colleagues, including James Britton, Tony Burgess, John Dixon, Anne Haas Dyson, Linda Flower, Sandra Schecter, Margaret Meek Spencer, and Mike Rose.

We want to thank Andy Bouman, who edited and formatted the final manuscript and who contributed much thought and time to its production. He also created all charts and tables, living up to his usual standards of perfection. A number of people assisted with transcription: in the U.S., David Ziegler, Pat Segrestan, and Alíce Guerrero; and in the U.K., although McLeod did much of the transcription, he was assisted by Jean Farr, Fay Cattini, and Esmi Dobson. Finally, Trish Cascardi helped in numerous ways, organizing both people and the flow of information and even helping with transcription when deadlines approached and the need became urgent.

CHAPTER 1—OVERVIEW

> It's really new and fun to write to an audience, you know, not just write to your teacher. Good experience I guess.

Cool J.[1], a thoughtful and articulate ninth-grade boy tracked in a "remedial" English class, provides his evaluation of a writing exchange between his class in the San Francisco Bay Area and a class in inner-city London. Besides Cool J.'s class, three other San Francisco area classes participated in writing exchanges with British classes as part of a comparative study of the teaching and learning of writing in the United Kingdom and the United States. The comparative study also includes already-completed national surveys of teachers and students in the two countries (see Freedman, 1987; Freedman & McLeod, 1988b). With the surveys as a backdrop, this report examines the teaching and learning of writing across the four pairs of exchange classes.

Through the exchanges, students in both countries, in their natural instructional settings, carry out parallel writing activities. These parallel activities provide the context for comparing the students' writing, their writing processes, and classroom practices. Also, as the writing is sent from one country to the other, it is possible to observe reactions in one country to what is written in another. Although including just four classrooms in each country, the exchanges provide multiple cross-national perspectives on the teaching and learning of writing: the researchers' perspectives, the teachers' perspectives, and the students' perspectives.

To organize the exchanges, university researchers and teams of teachers in each country worked together to figure out how the exchanges could become the basis for supportive and exciting learning environments for the participating students. Across the eight classrooms, the teachers succeeded in creating these exciting environments to varying degrees. Thus, the cross-national study includes not just comparisons of static classrooms but of classrooms in motion as they accommodate a new activity, the exchange. And so across the two countries, the project also involves tracing a process of instructional change and how that process plays out when coupled with a developing and ongoing university-school relationship.

The background survey consists of questionnaires mailed to teachers of writing identified as particularly thoughtful and to a sample of their students at the secondary school level. The survey results suggest two major differences in how teachers across the United States and Great Britain view teaching and learning and one major difference between teachers and students in both countries:

1. Teachers in Britain are more likely to stress imaginative writing, while teachers in the United States are more likely to stress critical thinking.
2. Teachers in Britain attribute their success to their attention to the needs of individual learners, while teachers in the United States are more inclined to attribute their success to the energy they expend to develop innovative activities for the curriculum.
3. Teachers in both countries concentrate on their students' writing and learning processes, while the secondary students focus on their written products and the grades they receive.

The exchange project enriches the self-report data from the surveys with close studies of classrooms in action. For example, Irene Robertson, one of the British teachers in the project, considers the classroom implications of meeting the needs of individual learners and uses a definition of imaginative writing rarely seen in the United States. Irene discusses how, through writing, her students' personal lives enter her classroom and how she treats her students seriously, as individuals who do not all fit into the cultural mainstream. Robertson's students' have written ironic pieces about their neighborhood of Tottenham, which one would imagine from reading the British popular press is virtually a black ghetto, where the young are lawless, the police are brutal, and there is constant racial conflict. The media picture is not accurate, but it infiltrates the students' thinking. About this "imaginative" writing, Robertson says:

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[1] All students in this report are identified with pseudonyms which they selected themselves. Cool J. and a number of the other boys in his class chose the names of popular rap musicians.

> I know that one of the things that students these days feel they have to do, when they talk about Tottenham, talk about living in Tottenham, is they have to try to distance themselves, from everybody's stereotypes of that area, and I think irony enables them to distance themselves, without . . . them becoming totally hostile to it, and that's important, because after all it is the place where they're going to go on living, and I was quite delighted with a lot of . . . their remarks about the area, and I just thought that was a different way of writing. It wasn't just pleasant chat about "Here am I, and this is who I am, and this is what I do." It was actually offering, offering a discourse on a different level. (Interview, March 13, 1989)

This ironic writing is a way for these students to reject the media's picture. It involves students in using what Freedman and McLeod (1988a), citing Raymond Williams (1983), call "critical imagination." Such writing captures and releases imagination as a writer gives voice to possibilities, tells what might happen or what might have happened, offers a different view, offers the hope that "it all could be better than this." Critical imagination achieves its purpose by offering a frightening vision of the future, as in Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty Four*, and at other times by proposing a fairer society, as Irene Robertson sees her students doing. Imaginative writing of this sort moves beyond the story, poem, or play to take on a socio-political dimension and also to include additional forms, including argument and essay.

An example from the United States explains the consequences of the survey finding that students say that they care more about their grades and their final products than about their writing and learning processes. Cool J.'s teacher, Joan Cone (1989), explains her class's attitudes at the start of the year:

> [F]or the most part they wrote not for an interested reader but for a mistake-finder who red-pencilled misspelled words, concentrated on penmanship and punctuation, and checked off assignments. Because of that perception of the teacher-as-audience, my students played it safe: they wrote as little as possible and as neatly as they could; they concerned themselves with correct headings, length of paper, and titles; and they wrote what they thought I wanted them to say. (p. 3)

With the exchange, Cone departs radically from standard practices, and as her students become absorbed in their writing, they focus less on their grades and their teacher's final evaluations. Cone describes the rewards that come with her students' shifting concerns, and exceptional for teachers in the United States shows that she knows her individual students well:

> Several students took on nicknames and wrote rap songs for the students in England. . . . Their narratives, too, began to have a personal voice. . . . And eventually their expository writing took on a personal voice. In an essay on the effects of drugs on society, B-Y, for example, referred to an article he had read about a drug-related crime in the local community, interweaving a narrative account of this crime into his exposition: "I read in the newspaper a few months back about a lady who was pregnant with twins. She gave birth to one and left it in the toilet wrapped up in paper towels, and she went into the front room to finish smoking coke. Then she went into the bathroom again to give birth to the

other baby. After she gave birth, she left it on the bathroom floor. She didn't call the police or ambulance until she started losing consciousness. When the police got there the babies were dead. The mother was taken to the hospital and when she was well she was taken to jail. That is a damned shame." (pp. 4-5)

The complexity and diversity of society in Britain and the United States require placing some boundaries around what can be learned through a cross-cultural study of this nature. The exchanges are located in specific classrooms, which cannot fully represent their countries. In each country, in each city or county, in every community and therefore in every school, there is a range and diversity of cultures, histories, and social practices. Schools and classrooms provide one of the meeting points of these versions of life and living. Thus, the exchange data from both countries reflect the diversity within a given society while at the same time they contribute to our knowledge of differences between them.

Past Research

Few previous studies have systematically compared the teaching and learning of writing in the United States and the United Kingdom. Such a study is needed to help clarify many recommendations for changing educational practice in the United States that have come from British researchers and theoreticians; a list of some of the most influential includes Douglas Barnes, James Britton, Tony Burgess, John Dixon, Margaret Donaldson, Michael Halliday, Nancy Martin, Alex McLeod, Peter Medway, Katherine Perera, Harold Rosen, Margaret Meek Spencer, Michael Stubbs, Joan Tough, Peter Trudgill, Gordon Wells, Andrew Wilkinson. Educational concepts currently popular in the United States, such as "talking to learn," "writing to learn," and "writing across the curriculum" have been the mainstays of the British educational literature (see for example, Britton's *Talking and Writing*, 1967, and his *Language and Learning*, 1970). To interpret and derive maximal benefit from the ideas that we import, educators in the United States need to understand the context from which the British ideas and practices arise.

A cross-cultural study can also become a powerful vehicle to stimulate thinking about educational reform in the United States. Cross-cultural work can bring into the foreground features of educational settings in the two countries that influence pedagogical practices but that have not been considered because they are invisible. It is these "natural" aspects of classroom life that only become salient when contrasted with the "natural" in another culture. Such broad thinking seems particularly critical in light of the nature of many studies in both the United States and the United Kingdom which have focused on the details of particular instructional practices (e.g., response groups or writing conferences) without understanding fully how variable features of classroom life may influence the shape and the effectiveness of those practices.

The need for a cross-cultural study of English teaching in the United States and Britain became apparent after the 1966 Anglo-American Dartmouth Conference at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire. This conference brought together major thinkers about the teaching of English and the language arts from the United States, Canada, and Great Britain for a month-long meeting. The goal was to pool the expertise of the scholars from the varied countries and to discuss "the aims and methods of English teaching" (Squire & Britton, 1975, p. xviii). Dixon (1967, 1975) and Muller (1967) wrote reports about the conference, from the British and American points of view, respectively. At Dartmouth, representatives from all countries proposed "a new interest in the learner, his development, and the processes of using language to learn" (Dixon, 1975, p. 112).

Immediately after the conference, the U.S. Department of Education funded a major comparative study of the teaching of English in the United States and Great Britain (Squire & Applebee, 1968). Squire and Applebee's study included observations in the classrooms of 42 schools, both private and state-supported, in England, Scotland, and Wales. These British classrooms were compared with classrooms in 158 high schools in the United States. Squire and Applebee found sharp contrasts, particularly with respect to the teaching of writing:

> One of the major insights gleaned from the study of these [British] schools is an awareness of the contribution which expressive uses of language can make to skill in using the language in all contexts. After their observations in these schools, few members of the project staff would challenge J.N. Hook's conclusion that "Americans err in stressing expository writing so greatly, especially with young children." (p. 324)

They also observed more writing across the curriculum, less stress on formal language study and direct teaching, and more stress on fluency and practice (pp. 2, 183-190, 325-326). They found more frequent informal conferences about writing between students and teachers in the course of a school day filled with more frequent breaks (e.g., morning coffee and longer lunch periods) and more sharing of written work with peer audiences than in the United States (pp. 194-199). Schools in the United States showed a predominant pattern of "write-correct-revise," the corrections being red-ink notations written by the teacher. In British schools they found instead little in the way of teachers' written corrections or student revisions after marking; rather the British teachers opt for "less frequent annotation and more extensive writing" (p. 192). Finally, to British programs for "slow learners or non-college students," they gave "a rather favorable assessment . . . in light of the failure of most American English programs to deal adequately and imaginatively with this problem" (p. 62). Squire and Applebee concluded that schools in the United States could benefit from the British example.

Soon after the Dartmouth conference and Squire and Applebee's study, a revolution in writing theory and research began in both countries. The changes in the United States were launched when Emig published her research on the writing process in 1971; in England Dixon (1967), Barnes, Britton, and Rosen (1969), and Britton and his colleagues (1975) were putting forth ideas with major implications for changes in practice. In the meantime, schools were undergoing substantial changes (see Squire and Britton's introduction to the 1975 edition of Dixon's *Growth through English* for a review of some of those changes on both sides of the Atlantic). In Britain, extensive reforms of the schools were affected by the establishment of comprehensive secondary schools and the almost total abolition of the 11+ examination.[2] The usual age for completing school rose from 15 to 16.

Trends in Britain in the 1970s continued toward democratization of education, but recent developments are working against these trends. Cuts in educational funding have made it difficult for schools to maintain the ideal of equal opportunity for all. Private schools are attracting more students because parents who can afford them are prepared to pay for the lower class sizes and better equipment and materials that such schools may offer. Other conservative tendencies include the current national examination, the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE), which is given to students at age 16+ and determines whether students complete secondary school and whether they are eligible for an additional two-year examination course, called the Advanced or A-level course, which prepares them for university entrance. The GCSE examination results are skewed such that only about 20% of the population take the A level course and become eligible for university educations. Appendix 1 contains a complete description of the British examination system.

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[2] The 11+ examinations were given to all children at about age 11, with separate multiple-choice tests in English, mathematics, and verbal reasoning (this last test similar to an IQ test). Based on scores on this examination, approximately 25% of the children were sent to selective schools which provided a route to a university education. The other 75% went to different schools that were not intended to prepare them for university. Only about 10% of the whole population actually went on to enroll in a university. Although the 11+ remains in some local authorities, it is no longer the great divider, virtually determining young people's futures by assigning them to separate schools.

The 1987 Education Bill mandated extensive changes in British education, including a national curriculum and mandatory testing programs beginning at age seven, as well as an increase in national control of education combined with central government restrictions on local financing of schools. This Bill has again redirected British education in a new and potentially another conservative direction.

In the United States, although the formal structures of schooling have changed little, philosophies have changed a great deal. The Viet Nam War drained resources and attention away from education to other national priorities. More recently, the country has seen a trend toward accountability and "basic" education, some argue at the expense of higher level standards. In the area of writing, the National Writing Project and other more local in-service programs for teachers, coupled with vigorous research activity, have been working to help the schools meet national calls for higher standards of literacy. Also, calls for a more professional and literate teaching force and for rewards for excellence in teaching are coming from the wider educational community (e.g., Boyer, 1983; Carnegie Forum, 1986; Goodlad, 1984; Holmes Group, 1986; Sizer, 1984). As in Great Britain, these calls for change have coincided with times of decreasing resources for education and decreasing morale in the teaching force.

The effects of these trends on written language instruction in the United States and in Britain are largely unknown. Since Squire and Applebee's report over twenty years ago, there has been no other detailed comparison of the teaching of writing in the two countries. The only recent cross-cultural project focusing on written language has been the international study of achievement in written composition, initiated in 1980 by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement through the International Education Association (IEA) (Degenhart, 1987; Gubb, et al., 1987; Gorman, et al., 1988; Purves, 1988). The IEA studies are designed primarily to compare the writing of students in 14 different countries, including the United States and Great Britain. Although an individual country report has been published in Britain (Gubb et al., 1987), few cross-cultural comparisons have been completed, and the British report only considers fifteen-year-old students. No report is available from the United States. Besides being in progress, the IEA studies are limited because they are designed primarily to yield comparative information about student achievement rather than about teaching and learning. Some information about teaching and learning was gleaned through questionnaires for students, teachers, and school personnel and through analyses of students' written products (e.g., see Connor & Lauer, 1988). Other relatively current information is available from status surveys about usual classrooms in both the United States (Graves, 1978 for elementary; Applebee, 1981 for secondary; Applebee, Langer, & Mullis' National Assessment of Educational Progress reports, 1986a, 1986b, 1987, 1990) and Britain (Bullock, 1975; Medway, 1986; Gubb et al., 1987).

Taken together, the status surveys show a rather dismal picture on both sides of the Atlantic, with too much stress on the mechanics of writing and with students performing poorly on more complex tasks in the United States, and with British students given limited encouragement to explore the range of possibilities for critical thinking through discursive writing and frequently given insufficient feedback. Direct comparisons are difficult to make, though, because these studies are not based on information that has been gathered in a parallel way in both countries. Besides lacking parallel data, we also lack information about those settings attempting to enact the reforms.

This project tries to capture the collective experiences of these two major English-speaking countries, both of which have a long tradition of concern about literacy. It focuses on especially successful practice in order to discover and compare not just what is, but what is being attempted in the teaching and learning of written language in the United States and Britain.

To summarize, the entire study consists of (a) parallel national questionnaires of successful teachers and their secondary students in the United States and Great Britain, and (b) observational studies in four pairs of classrooms which are exchanging writing between the two countries. Since the results of the questionnaire study have already been reported, only the results gleaned from the exchange classrooms are described here. These results are written from the point of view of the research team in the United States, with the British data used only as it contrasts with and informs the data from the United States. The goal is to highlight contrasts that will point to directions for making improvements in education in the United States or that offer cautionary notes as U.S. educators move in new directions. We describe in most detail those aspects of the British system that U.S. educators might adopt or reject or adapt. The intent is not to imply that the British system as a whole is better or worse than the system in the United States but rather to find strong and weak spots in the U.S. system and then to highlight particular aspects of the British system which hold lessons for U.S. educators.

Chapter 2 contains the methods for the exchange study. Chapters 3-6 contain case studies of the four pairs of classes engaged in the exchanges, with each of these chapters devoted to one pair, and with each case pointing to contrasts in the teaching and learning of writing in the two countries. Chapter 7 provides the synthesis across cases and the overall conclusions.

Research Questions

Through case studies of the four pairs of exchange classes, we seek to answer two sets of questions from the points of view of the research teams, the teachers, and the students:

1. What institutional supports and constraints are associated with the teaching and learning of writing in schools in the United States and Great Britain—at the national, district, and school levels and at the classroom level?
2. In each country, what characterizes the classroom cultures in which adolescent writers report and interpret their ideas and their wider cultural experiences? In these varied classroom cultures, what are the patterns of writing development for individual students in the United States and across the United States and Great Britain? In particular, how are students' broader social needs integrated with their academic needs?

CHAPTER 2—METHODS

Overview

The exchanges took place over a two-year period (1986-1988), with some teachers continuing across the two years and a few leaving after one year to be replaced by new participants. During the first year, the university research teams and the participating teachers worked together to develop the concept of the exchange, explore the possibilities inherent in it, and identify difficulties which we could then anticipate in the second year. The first year provides background data while the second-year data are analyzed fully for the cross-cultural study.

Background: The First Year Exchanges

The first-year exchanges were conducted in the 1986-87 academic year. The intention was to find teachers in the United States and Great Britain who would be willing and long-term collaborators, with particular interests and expertise in the teaching of writing. Freedman identified five teachers in the San Francisco Bay Area and McLeod identified five in the London area. In both countries, the teachers' schools served city neighborhoods, most with a large percentage of minority and, in Britain, bilingual students.[1] The classes participating in the exchanges spanned grades 6-9, and all were mixed gender. All the British classes were mixed ability (untracked) and selected to be mixed gender to parallel the U.S. groups. The Bay Area classes presented a range of ability groupings: one was mixed, another was labeled English as a second language, one was labeled average, one was labeled gifted, and one was labeled remedial. The participating teachers and their exchange partners, as well as the grade level of their classes and the designated ability level, are included in Table 2.1.

The grade six/seven (Judy Logan/Kate Chapman) and grade seven (Robin Davis/Jean Dunning) exchanges operated with notable success through the year, although Robin and Jean's exchange got off to a late start because of the withdrawal of the original American teacher whom Robin replaced.[2] The grade eight exchange (Helen Ying/John Hickman) produced a large quantity of highly committed writing from the British class, and a level of writing in the U.S. second language class that the teacher felt was unprecedented for comparable groups. One of the grade nine exchanges (Keith Caldwell/Sue Llewellyn) faced a number of unavoidable upsets—closure of the London school for some weeks because of damage in the severe winter, and very slow delivery of a key set of writing to the U.S. school. The other grade nine exchange (Charlene Delfino/Alex Moore) also encountered difficulties. The American class contained a high proportion of students who needed special academic assistance, a kind of group Charlene had not taught in a number of years. Alex Moore's British class produced a quantity of remarkable writing, especially from bilingual students, but others did not maintain their interest when the writing from the United States was slow in appearing.

In this first year of the exchange, the teachers met regularly with the research teams in their respective countries, kept notes and information about their exchanges, and helped one another solve problems that emerged. The teachers were invited to write about those aspects of the exchange that they found most interesting and most productive for their students. The five British teachers have written at some length about the 1986-87 exchange. Their contributions are included in Part II of this report. For the American teachers, the first year served as a pilot and none

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[1] In the United Kingdom, one school was an exception, located in a socially mixed village in Leicestershire, about 100 miles north of London.

[2] The original teacher withdrew because of organizational problems in the school.

Table 2.1
Classroom Exchange Pairs

First Year Exchange Pairs		
United States	**United Kingdom**	**Grade**
Delfino (low)	Moore (mixed)	9th
Caldwell (low)	Llewelyn (mixed)	9th
Ying (esl)	Hickman (mixed)	8th
Davis (mixed)	Dunning (mixed)	7/8th
Logan (gifted)	Chapman (mixed)	6/7th

Second Year Exchange Pairs		
United States	**United Kingdom**	**Grade**
Logan (gifted)	Chapman (mixed)	6/7th
Davis (mixed)	Hickman (mixed)	7/8th
Reed (low)	Robertson (mixed)	9th
Cone (low)	Llewelyn (mixed)	9th

submitted writing of their own. Since the British data from the first year are especially rich, McLeod plans to write about the first-year exchanges from the British point of view.

In the United States, the experiences gained from the first-year exchanges helped us identify some basic issues involved in creating classroom cultures that support writing and our understandings helped us organize and frame the second-year exchanges. In the United States the collaborating teachers taught us that successful exchanges require radical departures from established norms and that making these departures is more difficult than either we or the teachers originally anticipated. First of all, the exchanges, to be successful, demanded a highly collaborative relationship between students and their teacher, who had to work together to prepare the writing to go to the other country. There was little place for the teacher in the role of examiner. Nevertheless, institutional constraints in the United States, like report cards and tracking systems coupled with deeply ingrained, competitive classroom routines, made it difficult, although not impossible, for the American teachers to work their ways into such collaborative relationships even in the context of the exchange.

Second, the exchanges demanded that students work for sustained periods of time on long projects while at the same time sending writing frequently enough to maintain the interest of the students in the other country. The demands of maintaining frequent contact and managing sustained work proved exceedingly complex for U.S. teachers. Also, the teachers had to play a major role in helping the students understand the constraints on the class in the other country. It may well be that with respect to both these issues, the existing curriculum and student/staff relationships in England made it easier there for the exchange of writing to become part of the program of study, a point that will be elaborated on more fully in the coming chapters.

Finally, when writing was sent, students awaited a response. In both countries, we spent much of the first year considering issues of response to exchange writing. These realizations in the first year pointed toward the need to examine what is involved in constructing classrooms in the United States where the teacher works as a collaborator alongside his or her students, where tensions between sustained writing and pacing are played out, and in both countries where students and teachers struggle to find a voice for "readerly" rather than "teacherly" response to student writing.

Besides understanding how the exchanges impacted classroom organization, we made a significant discovery about how to help students make social connections to academic work. In particular, because we did not conceptualize the exchanges as pen pal letters but as substantive exchanges of many kinds of writing, we discouraged letter writing in the first year. However, we found that students had to make social contacts in order to get to know the distant audience and thereby feel comfortable sharing significant academic work with that audience. Thus, in the second year, we made a point of facilitating the social alongside and as a basis for the academic, the result being that informal writing, including letters, were actively encouraged and that the students increased greatly their overall interest in and engagement with the more clearly academic aspects of the exchanges. Since a central question of the study involves understanding how classroom culture interacts with writing development, this discovery about teenage culture sets the stage for additional discoveries about how the personal and academic could support each other in the service of promoting writing development in both countries.

Organizing the Second Year Exchanges

The Participants: The Teachers and the Students

For the second-year exchanges, two of the original first-year San Francisco Bay Area teachers and three of the original first-year British teachers continued with the project. The teachers who dropped out had varied reasons. In the United States Charlene Delfino left classroom teaching for a district-level administrative post; Helen Ying took a maternity leave; and Keith Caldwell had too many other pressing commitments. In Britain Jean Dunning was working on a Ph.D., and Alex Moore left his school to take a research appointment with the Open University. Because it proved difficult to monitor five exchanges in 1986-87, especially in Britain where resources were sparse, we reduced the number of exchanges to four for the second year. The 1987-88 participating teachers, their exchange partners, and the grade-levels of their classes are presented in Table 2.1 alongside the first-year participants. Table 2.2 summarizes the ethnic make-up of the classrooms in the study and the schools in which they are situated. It is important to note that all classes in the study except Robin Davis's in the United States consist of about 50% or more minority students; in this study minorities make up the majority of the participating students and therefore present an array of cultures for study.

The sixth/seventh grade pair (Judy Logan/Kate Chapman) and the seventh/eighth grade pair (Robin Davis/John Hickman) had participated in the first year, although Robin and John had not worked with each other the year before. Sue Llewellyn, the British member of one ninth grade pair (Joan Cone/Sue Llewellyn), had also participated before. Both members of the other ninth-grade pair (Susan Reed/Irene Robertson) were new to the project. Because we had a cadre of teachers in the second year who were experienced with the exchange and because we had learned a great deal about what is involved in running an exchange smoothly, it proved easy to introduce new teachers to the project.

As in the first year, in London, where there has been a strong and effective movement against tracking, all participating classes were mixed ability. Although we wanted to select parallel groups in the United States, we continued to have difficulty locating mixed ability classes in the San Francisco Bay Area, where classes are typically tracked. Robin Davis's seventh-grade group was one of the few mixed ability classes we could find to fit our criteria for the study. Working within this tracked system, besides the one mixed ability class, we selected two lower tracks, so that we could study students who were labelled "at risk for school failure" (both ninth-grade groups fell into this category) and one "gifted" class, Judy Logan's sixth-grade group. Inasmuch as possible, we drew from urban schools, in areas with high concentrations of minority students from middle to lower socioeconomic backgrounds.

The students in each exchange class willingly agreed both to help with decisions about exchange activities and to share their work and their ideas with the research team. The students were also invited to write about their impressions of differences in the teaching and learning of writing in the United States and the United Kingdom. Additionally, in each classroom four students who responded to the exchange activities in different ways were selected for case study.[3] These students are described in some detail in the separate reports of their classes' exchanges in Chapters 3-6.

Setting up Collaborations: Participants' Roles

The design of the exchange study demanded collaboration between university researchers and teachers as well as between the researchers, teachers, and students, with each group having a distinct role to play and a distinct view of the exchanges. The study also necessitated international collaboration between the teams of researchers, between the pairs of teachers, and between the classes of students.

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[3] In one American classroom, Cone's, and in one British classroom, Hickman's, we included a fifth focal student. In Cone's class one of the focal students worked so closely with another student in the class that it was necessary to study the two as a pair. In Hickman's class, the U.K. researchers felt that the students were too diverse to represent them well with only four students.

Table 2.2

School and Class Ethnic Percentages

		Logan/Chapman		Davis/Hickman		Reed/Robertson		Cone/Llewellyn	
Ethnic Group[1]		School	Class	School	Class	School	Class	School	Class
	US UK	(n = 850) (n = 1200)	(n = 37) (n = 25)	(n = 586) (n = 900)	(n = 30) (n = 26)	(n = 1486) (n = 1200)	(n = 27) (n = 17)	(n = 1500) (n = 1100)	(n = 19) (n = 22)
African American/ African Caribbean/ other African origin	US	18	14	12	10	30	37	46	68
	UK	30	24	15	8	50	53	43	38
Asian[2] Asian subcontinent	US	30	6	20	8	—	—	—	—
	UK	15	16	65	46	—	—	12	14
Chicano/Latino	US	35	25	5	10	10	15	4	11
	UK	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Greek/Turkish/Cypriot	US	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	UK	25	20	1	4	25	18	—	—
Other White	US	18	56	63	73	60	48	50	21
	UK	30	40	19	42	25	29	45	48

1. Different reporting methods in the two countries reflect different immigration patterns; therefore, no Chicano/Latinos are reported for U.K. schools, no Greek/Turkish/Cypriots are reported for U.S. schools, and the label Asian refers to different Asian groups in the two countries as does the label African origin. In addition, U.K. schools do not always keep statistics about school-wide ethnic origins. Therefore, in some cases, U.K. school figures are estimates provided by the teachers.
2. Cone and Reed's school district does not report Asians separately but instead groups them with Chicano/Latinos.

As the university-based researchers, we designed the overall project, conceptualized the theory behind the study, called and organized teacher meetings, and generally facilitated the progress of the exchanges (with both financial and academic support). The teachers helped develop the theoretical base, and they translated theory into practice and involved their students actively in the translation process. The teachers also made all decisions about how to run their own classrooms and how to translate the theoretical ideas into practice.

The research teams from the United States and Britain were in regular contact through an international computer network and occasional telephone calls. Sarah Freedman visited the British classrooms in October, 1987; and Alex McLeod visited the classrooms in the States in March, 1988. Thus, planning and especially data collection decisions were made jointly by the teams in the two countries.

Throughout the year, the paired teachers communicated with one another by mail, supplemented with an occasional telephone call as well as computer messages sent through the researchers. To varying degrees, the pairs negotiated parallel writing activities to be exchanged. The students, without resources for telephone calls abroad, communicated only in writing through the exchange activities.

Although there were differences in the ways different pairs of classes conceptualized their exchanges, all of the exchanges shared a number of features:

1. In all cases, the students in the paired classrooms exchanged writing across a year's time, although the amount and types of writing varied within and across exchange pairs.
2. In no case did the exchange consist solely or even mostly of letter writing. Although personal writing was encouraged and even facilitated, the main academic business of the exchanges was to provide an occasion for students in the two countries to write substantial and committed pieces for a distant and real audience: autobiographies, books about their schools and their communities, fiction and poetry, pieces about books they had read, essays about important and often controversial issues.
3. The paired classes worked together to make their writing programs for the year center around the exchange activities, with classes varying in how completely they turned over their program to the exchange, both within exchange pairs and across pairs.

During the second exchange year, we also began another collaboration with researchers at the National Foundation for Educational Research in England in hopes of adding a computer link between the pairs of schools. Given limited resources and time, we had substantial difficulty setting up the links. Toward the end of the school year, we succeeded in establishing communication between one pair of classrooms (Susan Reed/Irene Robertson). Two American teachers, first Robin Davis and later Joan Cone, established links between their schools and the university so that material could be sent across international networks, although only Robin actually had her students send material in this manner. The British research team arranged for Robin's partner John Hickman, who had no computer connection himself, to receive the writing. Sue Llewellyn's class also prepared material on the computer which Alex McLeod sent via the University computer network.

Although the students were enthusiastic about the possibilities of the immediacy of the computer connection, because of limited resources and time, the computer proved to be more of a hindrance than a help to the exchanges. In particular, several teachers devoted so much time to managing the logistics of the computer link that they found themselves short on time for the actual writing for the exchange. We do not intend to discourage others from attempting computer exchanges but rather want to stress the importance of appropriate support to their success.

Data Collection

For the 1987-88 exchanges, data were collected to provide the basis for an in-depth, cross-cultural look at the teaching and learning of writing when "real" audiences are used in the classroom. Primary data include: (a) student portfolios of all exchange writing, (b) interviews with the teachers and focal students, (c) in the United States teacher and focal students' journals, and (d) classroom observations. Secondary data include: (a) minutes and audiotaped recordings of teacher meetings; (b) communication between the teachers and researchers in the form of notes, casual conversations, and telephone calls; communication between the teacher pairs in the form of letters and an occasional telephone call and in some cases computer mail; and communication between the research teams in the form of computer mail and occasional letters and telephone calls; and (c) when available, written reports by the teachers.

Primary Data

Student Writing Portfolios. Each pair of teachers planned a range of writing activities, which formed units of work, some written quickly but others written over extended spans of time. The teacher or a member of the research team photocopied all American and British student writing including American drafts and some private correspondence between pairs of students when the students elected to release copies. The topics for the exchange writing are described in the case studies of each exchange pair. At the end of each writing unit, the completed pieces were mailed to the students in the other country. The writing for the U.S. focal students is traced across each case. The British writing is depicted as it is perceived by the American students, as it influences them, and as they respond to it. The writing forms the most important base from which the cross-cultural comparisons emerge.

Teacher Interviews. In the United States a member of the research team formally interviewed the teachers at least three times during the year. In the United Kingdom the teachers were interviewed once during the year; however, with one of the British teachers, John Hickman, the school-year interview was postponed until the start of the next academic year. In addition, Ellie O'Sullivan of the British team interviewed the American teachers in December, 1988 and early January, 1989 and the British teachers between late January, 1989 and April, 1989 (Appendix 2 contains all teacher interview questions). Finally, Freedman and McLeod in England and Freedman in the United States conducted a final reflective interview with all teachers once this report had been written, in October and November, 1990. All interviews were tape recorded and interviews in the United States were transcribed in full.[4] British interviews have been selectively transcribed.

In the first teacher interview in the United States, held in February and early March, we asked the teachers to describe how each student in the class was participating in the exchange—that is, how the student was connecting to the distant audience and how the teacher saw the student's writing progressing across the year. These interviews were for the purpose of helping us choose focal students who were approaching the exchange work differently. The interviews were informal and relatively unstructured. The single British interview did not review the focal students' participation in a particular activity but did include an assessment by the teacher of the students' progress up to the time of the interview.

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[4] Kate Chapman's interview with Freedman and McLeod in October, 1990 was not tape recorded but extensive field notes were taken during the interview and were consolidated immediately after the interview.

In the second teacher interview in the United States, held in May, we asked each teacher to describe and evaluate one writing activity for the exchange and to discuss each focal student's participation in the activity. In the third teacher interview in the United States, held in the last few weeks of school or in the month after the school year ended, we asked each teacher to review the progress across the year of each focal student, talking about all aspects of that student's work. We also asked the teachers to summarize their thoughts about the exchange project. In Britain, because the school year is longer by six weeks, the interviews were held slightly later but paralleled those in the United States. Although John Hickman was not interviewed formally during the academic year, he helped with the selection of focal students in an unrecorded telephone interview.

O'Sullivan's interview was designed to ascertain the effects of the "publicness" of an exchange on the participating teachers. She was mainly interested in the effects on a teacher of exposing student writing to the scrutiny of another class and another teacher, something a part of any exchange activity, as well as the special public nature of this particular project, as part of a university research effort. Since the American teachers were reflecting on their year with someone from the British team, these interviews yield interesting information from the American teachers; the interviews also add to the depth of the British data base.

In the last interview teachers responded to the written report of their exchanges (Chapters 3-6), reflected back on the exchange experience, and reflected on global differences they noticed in the teaching and learning of writing in the two countries. Other than corrections of points of fact, the substance of this last interview is included only in the conclusions to the case-study chapters, and in the final concluding chapter.

Student Interviews. In the United States the focal students in each classroom were interviewed three times during the winter and spring; British focal students were interviewed twice, but their interviews covered the topics from the three American interviews.[5] Like the teacher interviews, the three American and two British student interviews were also conducted informally even though the interviewer had a list of questions to cover (see Appendix 2 for student interview questions). In the first student interview, held in both countries, the focal students were asked to discuss: (a) their thoughts about the foreign audience; (b) their process for writing two pieces, the autobiography (an assignment common to all the classes) and another major exchange writing of their choice; (c) their assessment of their products; and (d) their assessment of the exchange project.

In the second student interview, which was not conducted in the United Kingdom, the American students were asked to read aloud one of the pieces for the exchange. During and after the read-aloud, they were asked to recall their process, to discuss their intentions when writing, to evaluate the product, to describe the audience for the piece and the effects of the audience on their writing.

In the final student interview, also conducted in the United States and Great Britain, the students were asked again to comment on American/British differences and to evaluate a portfolio of their own writing; in the United States they were asked to evaluate a portfolio of the writing of one of the students from Britain as well. The interviewers also discussed the students' future goals for their writing and sometimes their broader thoughts about their futures.

Teacher and Student Journals in the United States. Teachers and students in the American classrooms kept "research" journals; however, in the different classrooms the journals functioned in different ways for both teachers and students. They also contained different numbers of entries, with some teachers writing several times a week throughout the year and with others writing under ten entries and only until Christmas. The students too exhibited different patterns both across classes and sometimes within a given class. Nevertheless, the journals contain key information about how teachers and students were responding to the exchange as it was happening. Furthermore, since interviews did not begin until February, the journals, along with the information shared at the regular teacher meetings, provide an important data source for the teachers' and students' thoughts during the early parts of the exchange.

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[5] Two British students, Leabow and Comp, in Irene Robertson's class missed their second interviews. One American student, Rose, in Joan Cone's class missed her third interview because she was having severe family problems.

Classroom Observations. Members of the research team visited all classrooms six to seven times; these visits were evenly spaced across the school year. Researchers visited, as much as possible, when writing was being produced for the exchange and when it was first received. Classroom talk was audiotaped and field notes were written immediately after each visit. When possible, notes were taken during the class meeting; however, the researchers often assisted the teachers and could not simultaneously take notes. Sarah Freedman made notes and tape recordings of her visits to British classrooms; Alex McLeod did the same when he visited American classrooms.

Secondary Data

Teacher Meetings. In the United States the research team met with teachers monthly during the school year, holding nine meetings from September to June. The British research team held seven meetings with teachers, evenly spread across the school year. At these meetings teachers and researchers shared and generated ideas and worked together to solve problems. A number of significant, essential questions, both practical and theoretical, were discussed in depth. For example, the significance of response to writing in an audience exchange became more and more apparent as the exchange proceeded. Also, questions related to redrafting writing were raised. Minutes were distributed after each teacher meeting to all participants as well as to the research team and teachers in the other country. Audiotaped recordings were also made of each teacher meeting.

Correspondence and Telephone Calls. The teachers saved copies of letters between them and their partner teachers. They also reported the substance of telephone calls to their partner teacher, and the research team made notes about these calls. Copies were collected of computer correspondence between teachers as well as all regular and computer mail between the United States and British research team. Notes were made to record the substance of telephone conversations between the teachers and the research team.

Teacher Reports. When available, teachers' formal reports and their writings about the exchange year are incorporated as secondary data. Two American teachers, Joan Cone and Susan Reed, and one British teacher, Kate Chapman, completed their reports. These are included in full in Part II, along with the writing from the five British teachers about their experiences in the first year of the exchange.

Data Analysis

Although this report will relate the results of a cross-cultural study, as noted in Chapter 1, it is written largely from the U.S. point of view. For the analysis, data from all sources are synthesized to construct a case report for each of the four exchange pairs. The goal ultimately is to use these comparisons across cultures to help us understand something more about the teaching and learning of writing in the United States. This means that the story of each exchange unfolds as it was perceived by the American research team, the American teacher, and the American students. Thus, the British student writing is described as it was received and understood by the American audience, not as it was conceptualized by the British students, whereas the writing from the United States is described in terms of how it was produced and intended. Likewise, the British response to the American writing is only presented as the American group saw it, not as the British group thought about it. However, at those points in the case studies when there is a clear and obvious evidence of mismatch between the British intentions and the American understandings and when the mismatch uncovers important cross-cultural differences, we present the British point of view. In this way we are able to analyze the key cross-cultural differences in the teaching and learning of writing as they unfold through the exchanges. The teachers have their own stories to tell as they write articles about the work from their own perspectives (see Part II for teacher reports).

General Background

As background to each case, the research team created a description of the teachers, their schools, and their classes. The descriptions are based on observations at the research sites, interviews and biographical information about the teachers, and for the students, interviews with them and their teachers as well as their writing. Descriptions for the United States were written by Sarah Freedman, with assistance from members of the American research team, and checked for accuracy by the American teacher participants. The British descriptions were written by Alex McLeod and checked for accuracy by the British teacher participants.

The institutional contexts in which the exchanges occur are then compared. Taken together across the four cases, these comparisons form the basis for answering the first research question about the similarities and differences in the institutional contexts for the teaching and learning of writing in the two countries.

Finally descriptions of U.S. focal students are presented. These descriptions are based on information gathered from observations of the students in the classroom, their writing across the year, and interviews with them and their teacher as well as pertinent notes in the teachers' journals. Descriptions were written by Freedman and checked by the teachers.

The Exchange

Following the general background descriptions is an overview of the writing sent and received across the year. The basic unit of analysis is a single exchange. The exchange unit includes all writing sent and received on a similar topic, all response to that writing, and all student and teacher talk about that writing and how it was received. The overview includes: (a) a timeline that charts the activities in each exchange, divided according to exchange units (b) word counts for the focal students in both countries for two pieces within two exchange units that are maximally parallel across the two countries, and (c) information about how the two teachers organized the exchanges.

The timeline indicates for each exchange unit the writing that was sent and received, the time span when it was being worked on in class, and the date it was mailed. Using information from classroom visits, teacher and student journals, and research team mailing records, one member of the research team from the United States created each timeline (see Figures 3.3, 4.3, 5.3, and 6.3), which was then checked for accuracy by at least two other members of the team. Freedman and McLeod again checked each timeline before presenting it to the teachers involved for their corrections.

Although a limited source of information about student writing, the word counts for focal students present the relative amounts of writing sent by students in the two countries. Since all focal student writing was retyped onto the computer, word counts could be obtained easily. For some exchanges in some classrooms focal students did not send one or another of the pieces to be counted. In these cases, since we wanted to tabulate the word counts to show contrasts across the countries, we substituted another student whose profile was most similar to the focal students'. Substitutions are indicated on the tables (see Tables 3.1, 4.1, 5.1, and 6.1); when two student names occur, the first authored the piece counted in the first column, and the second authored the piece counted in the second.

Information about how the two teachers organized the exchange is derived from the full analysis of the exchange data across all exchange units. The primary data from the United States (teacher and student interviews, student writing, and teacher and student journals) were read by Freedman and at least one assistant. They identified key themes related to organizing the exchange as they attended to: (a) what the teachers and students did to make the exchange happen and (b) how the American students and teachers embedded the exchange activities into their classroom routines.

After the overview of the exchange is a section presenting the writing sent back and forth across the school year. In presenting the writing, we attend to themes related to (a) what was similar and different about the teaching-learning situation and the writing in the United States and Great Britain, from the American teacher and student points of view, (b) how different students developed as writers in the U.S. classrooms, and (c) how students in the United States responded to the writing that arrived from Britain. Each key theme is elaborated as it is traced through each main activity in the exchange, from the point of view of (a) the American teacher (as determined by interviews, journals and letters to exchange partner, and classroom observations); (b) each American focal student (as determined by interviews, writing, journals, and response to British writing); and (c) the researchers (as determined by observations and synthesis of information from multiple data sources). The British writing figures prominently in the analysis since it was the medium through which the American students and teachers viewed the British class and since it allowed students, teachers, and researchers to draw inferences about cross-cultural differences that were focal to this study. The reception and influence of the British writing on the American students is exemplified with British focal cases as well as the writing of other British students when that writing became most central to the perceptions of the American students. In all cases, when a theme was being explored, all data were combed for information pertinent to the theme. In particular the research team searched for counter-examples to the existing generalizations and when counter-examples were found, the descriptions were modified to account for them. For the American focal students, to give some indication of development across time, we did word counts for each piece of writing exchanged.

For the formal written responses, we coded response functions, with the function categories emerging from the data. Across all the written responses in both countries and in all classrooms, we identified the following six response functions: response as evaluation, response as personal communication, response as extending experience, response as reiteration and clarification, response as apology, response as correction. Appendix 3 contains examples for each function.

Freedman wrote all cases, with McLeod reviewing drafts to look for instances of severe mismatch between British intentions and American understandings. At these points in the cases, McLeod inserted the British point of view so that conclusions about cross-cultural differences could be made. He also filled in missing and incomplete information, drawing especially on the British data sources. O'Sullivan also reviewed all cases to check the British point of view. Finally, the teacher participants reviewed all drafts and checked them for accuracy of fact and interpretation, especially with regard to the representation of their points of view. Needless to say, the case reports represent a complex of cross-cultural negotiation, both within countries as university-researchers, classroom teachers, and students meet, and across national boundaries as the representation of "what happened" takes shape in ways that account for the multiplicity of world views. Indeed the process of the negotiations across cultures is itself worthy of study.

CHAPTER 3—JUDY LOGAN AND KATE CHAPMAN

General Background

The Teachers, Their Schools, and Their Classes

The Teachers

Judy Logan. A veteran teacher of 23 years, Judy Logan has taught at Everett Middle School for the past 18. She taught for five years at another inner-city, San Francisco, public middle school before coming to Everett. Judy's attachment to Everett is special and long-standing. Like her mother and uncle before her, Judy attended Everett; in fact, her picture as a school girl there is featured in a prominent spot on her classroom bulletin board. Judy recounts that her uncle even remembers when the school was built in 1927. He recalls that it was admired for its beauty and considered a "palace" in the neighborhood. Given her family roots at Everett, Judy feels deeply committed to her school in a way that few teachers in a large urban district do.

At Everett, Judy is especially well-known for her work to establish and maintain a high quality program in Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) and for her development of a women's studies program. She received a mentor teacher award to compile curriculum materials on women and has attended and presented at numerous conferences and led workshops in this area. After completing her BA at San Francisco State, she did most of the coursework for her MA, with a specialty in the English department in women's literature and women's studies. She routinely supervises student teachers from her alma mater and enjoys mentoring them, especially as she follows them through the beginning of their teaching careers.

The GATE program at Everett has been in operation since 1973, with Judy teaching GATE classes since 1979 and acting as program co-director since 1985. Judy and the other Everett GATE teachers have built their program to emphasize the nurturing of student creativity in a supportive environment. According to Judy, most other GATE programs in San Francisco feature accelerated and high-pressured academic environments, with most of the programmatic attention paid purely to academics. Because the Everett program's reputation for high academic standards is accompanied by plentiful concern for students' emotional needs and because of the strong social supports built into the program, many students who have special emotional needs find their way into Judy's classroom.[1] Given her experiences with them, Judy has become exceptionally adept at handling these needs; often when she talks about her students, she sounds as much like a counselor as she does a teacher.

Judy's deep commitment to her students is also manifest in the special efforts she makes to get extra materials for them; she recently has received grants to obtain films, a computer for her classroom, and a class set of women's biographies. Judy gets these extras pretty much on her own, with little support from school and district administrators. Indeed, at a time when Judy feels that she badly needs more support for her efforts, she seems to be getting less. GATE programs across the state of California have been cut back, and now these programs must survive with fewer resources. During the exchange year, cuts in the Everett program resulted in Judy's losing a special period for preparation, with the consequence that she taught five classes a day rather than four. Cuts also caused the loss of one teacher in the program, meaning that Judy and her remaining colleagues had to absorb rises in class size. In the exchange class Judy had 37 students, the largest of any class in the study, in either country. Until the exchange year, Judy routinely entertained her students in groups of four for "tea parties" at her home. However, she felt compelled to end this practice:

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[1] Parents of students who are in GATE classes can select from among a number of San Francisco schools that offer GATE programs when their children enter middle school. Students who are not in the GATE program go to their neighborhood middle school or apply for an open enrollment slot at another middle school.

> I didn't take them home for tea parties this year, four at a time, because I just felt that it would go on forever, and having one day a week where I spend another two hours with kids, even though it's only four or five at a time, I just didn't feel I would have the energy. (Interview, July 20, 1988)

Another area where Judy needs support from her administration is in providing information for prospective students. Currently, parents who are considering middle-school GATE programs observe classes in different schools and talk to the prospective teachers. Judy has limited these parent visits to Wednesdays only, but every Wednesday she has as many as ten parents in her class observing her teach and then waiting to discuss the program with her. Because she no longer has a preparation period during which she can talk to these parents, she feels constrained and frustrated:

> I feel like I'm selling next year's program during the time when I should be teaching this year's program. And since I don't have that period free any more, I have to talk to them [the parents] while I've also got 35 kids in the classroom, so this is very frustrating to me. (Interview, July 20, 1988)

With her five-class load, Judy has three, fifty-minute, morning periods with the sixth graders in this study, during which she teaches language arts, reading, and social studies. This long block of time for an interdisciplinary program is designed to provide the students with a smooth transition from elementary to middle school. In the afternoon, Judy teaches two periods of English and social studies to seventh and eighth graders. These last two periods are usually organized as nine-week, special topic units (e.g., Shakespeare, Rebellion and Conformity, Greek Mythology, American Women Making History), with the students and topics potentially changing every nine weeks.

Kate Chapman. Kate Chapman, Judy's exchange teacher in the U.K., is the youngest teacher in the study and has taught for only five years, all of them at Northumberland Park School in London. Kate completed her B.A. in English at Queen Mary College, University of London, and her teacher education course, the Postgraduate Certificate of Education (PGCE), at the University of London, Institute of Education. Kate seldom misses a conference of the National Association of Teachers of English (NATE) or of the London Association of Teachers of English (LATE), and in 1988 she was invited to join the organizing and policy-making committee of LATE and the planning committee of the Language in the Inner City group. Kate is a member of the National Review Panel for English literature in the Northern Examining Association, one of the five national boards that run the GCSE (see Appendix 1 for additional information about the role of the National Review Panels).

Although only a fifth year teacher, Kate was appointed acting deputy head of her English department, to fill in for another teacher on maternity leave. Her duties include coordination of all sixth form A level English courses,[2] coordination of GCSE Literature,[3] and supervision of two first-year teachers or "probationers." Kate also has to handle discipline referrals (students behaving unacceptably in other English teachers' classes) and to undertake all the duties of the head of the department if he is absent. Besides taking on this administrative post, Kate taught seven classes during the exchange year: a second year group (the exchange class); a third year group (her tutor group[4] and the exchange class in the first year of the project); a fourth year GCSE class; a fifth year GCSE class; a sixth form GCSE class (for students who had been unsuccessful in the examination the previous year and needed preparation to take the test once again); and two A level groups. At the secondary level, English classes normally meet only four hours (or periods) per week in Britain as opposed to five hours in the United States, but the teaching loads are equivalent since British teachers routinely teach more classes than American teachers do. Still, as British workloads go, Kate's seven course load is considered heavy.

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[2] Sixth form courses (grades 11 and 12) include advanced level study (A level) of usually two or three subjects of the students' choosing. The A level course is the route to university and college entry. Only those students who score high enough on their GCSE examination or who are deemed eligible by their school may take the A level course. As coordinator of the A level English courses, Kate acts as liaison with the examining board for her school and holds meetings of the A level English teachers.

[3] Given that language and literature were assessed separately on the GCSE, each school had a coordinator for language and another for literature. As coordinator for GCSE literature, Kate supervised the grading of the examination folders

Kate, as a secondary English specialist teacher, meets with her exchange class for only one fifty-minute period, four days a week. One of the days is devoted to individualized reading experiences, either in the school library or with Kate. Thus, compared to Judy who meets her students for a 150-minute block, five days a week, for reading, language arts, and social studies, Kate has very little class time with her group and also has less flexibility in the amount of time available to spend on the exchange.

For the 1987-88 exchanges, Judy and Kate were the only pair working together for a second consecutive year. Their established collaboration was bolstered by two face-to-face meetings, both occurring when Judy made trips to Great Britain and, continuing their exchange into its third year, they met a third time when Kate visited the United States in the summer of 1989. For Judy and Kate, the exchange has become more than simply exchanging student writing through the mail or exchanging ideas for teaching; it has become a friendship that grew from the writing exchange, and continues with the exchange remaining a fundamental part of their relationship, having maintained the exchange without the support of the research team.

Their Schools

Everett Middle School. Everett Middle School (grades 6-8), near the center of San Francisco, is surrounded by four diverse neighborhoods, feeding in a nearly complete cross section of the city's population. To its east, the Mission District is home to the largest Chicano/Latino community in the San Francisco Bay Area, while the lower Fillmore to the north is a primarily African-American, working class area. To Everett's west the Castro district contains

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at the school, completed the administrative paperwork involved, acted as liaison between the examination board and the school, and held meetings for the GCSE literature teachers at her school.

[4] Each teacher has one class that is designated as his or her tutor group. This group is one that the teacher generally oversees for the five compulsory years of secondary school (Forms 1-5, U.S. grades 6-10) and for which the teacher is more broadly responsible. According to the Northumberland Park School *Teachers' Guide* (p. 33), group tutors are "To KNOW and be directly responsible within the school for each individual student within the tutor group." The tutor is also "To be the 'first line of action' in helping each student to cope with her/his difficulties. Sometimes this will demand a disciplinary response, at others the offering of a listening ear or helping hand, at others the sharing of ideas and experiences." The tutor also reports about the students in her or his tutor group to the "Head of Year"; serves as "a 'resource person' to other members of staff"; keeps the students' records up to date; "co-ordinate[s] the subject reports to parents and give[s] a coherent report on the 'whole' student"; "make[s] him/herself known to the family of each student. . . and . . . interpret[s] to the parents the philosophy and practice of Northumberland Park Community School"; and finally, meets with other tutors of students in the same year and makes "a positive contribution to the development of the Year team and the ethos of the year." The form tutor meets with his or her tutor group two times a day: once at the beginning of the day in a homeroom when attendance is taken and then another time during the day for an attendance check. In addition, throughout the five years the tutor group meets once a week for one period for personal and social education, when the group discuss topics such as friendship, teachers, bullying, sex education, careers and the like.

the largest gay community in the city, with singles and families living there as well. To its south, Noe Valley is a middle class, mostly white, family area. In all of these neighborhoods, corner shops and restaurants abound, with shopping streets and commercial areas mixed with housing.

As Table 2.2 shows, Everett's school population of 850 is 35% Spanish surname; 30% Asian, mostly Filipino; 18% African American; and 18% other white. Besides the GATE program for 175 of its students, Everett has a federally-funded program (Chapter 2) for students scoring below the 50th percentile on tests in reading and math; bilingual programs in Spanish, Chinese, and Tagalog; programs in English as a Second Language; and a Special Education program.

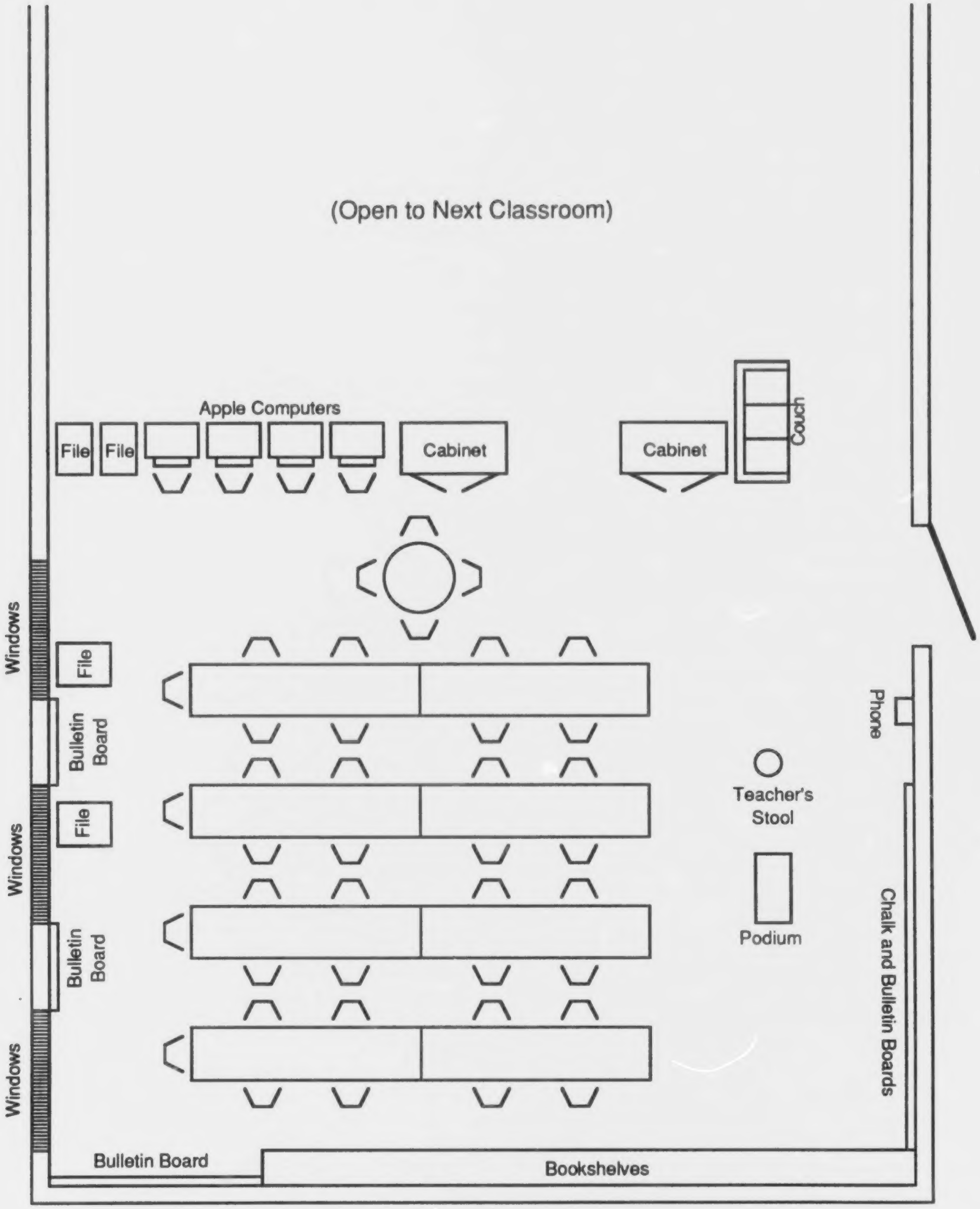
Built in 1927, Everett features the Spanish style of architecture prevalent in California. Its three stories of creamy stucco with floral insets are covered by a terra cotta tile roof. Painted Spanish tiles decorate its facade. A concrete play area behind Everett merges with the playground of a neighboring elementary school, the two schoolyards separated only by a fence. Everett faces a busy city street, with its neighbor across the street the main offices of the Catholic Archdiocese for San Francisco.

Upon entering the building, one finds a calm and quiet unusual in city schools. While children are changing classes, the principal, Mr. Crivello, monitors the halls to ensure silence. Other than when classes are changing or during lunch, one sees the shiny reflection of waxed and spotless brick-red linoleum in the empty corridors. The silence is modulated with the periodic muted murmurs of ongoing teaching and learning inside classrooms. Classrooms, on the whole, are quiet places.

Judy's classroom, on the second floor in the back of the building, was formerly a library. Figure 3.1 shows the layout. Spacious and open, the room is shared by Judy's classes and a class for students designated as having learning difficulties in reading, writing, and mathematics. Since no walls separate the two classes and since generally Judy and the other teacher teach simultaneously, noise is a concern. But the two teachers coordinate their schedules so that while one is lecturing or having another potentially noisy lesson, the other is supervising a quiet activity, such as reading time. Since the converted library is large, the teachers are also able to keep a fair amount of space between the two classes, with one class at either end of the room, the two groups separated by a couch, bookshelves and a round table. The furniture arrangement keeps the students in the two classes out of each others' lines of vision. Judy's students sit at tables of four, arranged in four rows of two tables each, with students sitting facing one another and not facing the front of the room where Judy often stands. Behind the students' tables is a bank of windows facing the back of the school. The windows are made of cloudy, non-breakable glass, and through them is a view of Twin Peaks and other hills of the city as well as the backs of neighborhood houses. In fact, from her classroom windows Judy can see the back of the house in which she was raised and the hospital in which she was born.

Northumberland Park School. Northumberland Park School, typical of British secondary schools, covers forms one through six or American grades six through twelve. It is located in the Tottenham district of the London Borough of Haringey. This outer London borough to the north of the inner city is about six to ten miles from central London, twenty minutes by underground. The borough is crossed by three major exit roads from London and three railways. The western side contains the prosperous suburban areas of Muswell Hill and Crouch End, and part of Highgate. On the eastern edge, near a canal and railway, are large and small factories, producing electrical goods, furniture, kitchen and household fittings, clothing, and the like. Many parents work locally in these factories, offices, and shops. Others commute to central London. The eastern side is densely populated, and contains the mainly working class areas Wood Green; Tottenham (the area of the school); and Harringay, from which the borough, established in its present form in 1964, took its name but altered the spelling. These areas make up a parliamentary constituency, Tottenham, which has the largest percentage of ethnic minority citizens in the

Figure 3.1: Judy Logan's Classroom


(Open to Next Classroom)
Apple Computers
File
File
Cabinet
Cabinet
Couch
Windows
File
Bulletin Board
File
Windows
Bulletin Board
Windows
Phone
Teacher's Stool
Podium
Chalk and Bulletin Boards
Bulletin Board
Bookshelves

country, and is represented in parliament by one of the few African-Caribbean MPs in the House of Commons. Unemployment in the area is much higher than the London average, especially for non-whites.

The buildings of Northumberland Park were erected in the early 1970s. The main building is two stories high, housing most of the school's teaching and administrative needs. Smaller separate buildings are for the sciences, music, and physical education. There are grassed areas with flower beds and a small decorative pool and adjoining playing fields. Looming across the road from the Northumberland Park campus is the stadium of the Tottenham Hotspur Football Club. One of London's largest soccer stadiums, it accommodates 80,000 and covers an entire city block. Local loyalty for the team is so intense that it is impossible to attend Northumberland Park and not be aware of Tottenham Hotspur. Indeed boys and girls at Northumberland Park are enrolled as junior members of the "Spurs." On the other three sides of the school are streets of terraced houses, and some larger homes with both front and back yards. Most students walk or take short bus rides to school.

Many of the houses and apartment blocks near Northumberland Park are owned and controlled by the borough itself. These are grouped as "estates," mostly built in the 1960s and 70s and typically include a number of high-rise apartment blocks of up to thirty stories. They function in many respects like government subsidized, low-cost housing in the U.S. One of these estates Broadwater Farm, became known world-wide in October, 1985, when fierce clashes erupted between black youths and the police. During the violence a policeman was killed. The looting, burning, and rioting continued all night. It was provoked by a particular incident—the police went to arrest a young man at his house, and his mother collapsed and died of a coronary failure; but in fact the outbreak was the result of long-standing conflict in the area between the police and the black communities, mainly African Caribbean.

Unlike at Everett, Northumberland Park School's classes are all mixed ability, in all subject areas. Second language learners are integrated into mainstream classrooms where English as a Second Language teachers spend as much time as possible supporting students in taking on the regular work of the class. Physically disabled students are also integrated into the mainstream, with elevators installed to carry students in wheelchairs to the upper floor. Hearing disabled and cerebral palsy students are also integrated. The organizational back-up is provided by the Special Needs Department which has built up a reputation for innovation and sensitivity in looking after every kind of learning and physical disability.

The school as a whole is managed with a keen eye on efficiency. Department meetings and year-tutor team meetings are held regularly. Committees and working parties are formed to draft policies on curriculum, pastoral care,[5] equal opportunities, and community links. In fact, every year the school publishes a Teachers' Guide which explicitly puts forth the school's aims and the careful organizational structures that have been built to support the accomplishment of those aims. In the 223-page 1986 Guide, the headteacher (principal) provides a preface to the description of the organizational structures:

> "If you want something to happen in a large organisation, you must structure it to happen".
>
> In the comprehensive school it is unfair to the student to leave things to chance and I have, therefore, tried to identify the different areas of interest with which we are all concerned.

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[5] "Pastoral care" focuses attention on the students' personal welfare in the school setting. Pastoral in the British system is complementary to "academic." According to the Northumberland Park *Teachers' Guide*, teachers' roles "are both pastoral and academic."

> It is essential that we see the "system" in perspective and develop structures to suit our needs; it is counterproductive for us to allow the "system" to tyrannise us. Our own self-awareness and keen perception of the needs of the school will tell us when we have to modify arrangements to suit circumstances.
>
> Above all, I hope that this structure will be seen to serve "people" and that members of staff will understand their own role within the structure as meaningfully as I hope the students will comprehend theirs.
>
> The development of a corporate identity and a sense of purpose will inevitably help us maintain a school with a high reputation for meeting the needs of the community. (p. 4)

The school day begins and ends early at Northumberland Park, leaving time in the day for teacher meetings and extra-curricular activities for the students.

The building itself suggests the emphasis on efficiency which pervades the school handbook. It always seems crowded and the corridors are too narrow, especially as they are used by students in wheel-chairs. Every bit of space is used; the overall effect is pleasant, and some areas, like the library and computer center, are comfortable and stimulating, typifying the high ideals of the school's statement of aims.

The library and computer center are near Kate's classroom. Other English teachers have adjacent rooms, an essential arrangement since the head of the department's duties include giving help to teachers who may need support. There is a small English teachers' room, used for meetings, for storing books and teaching materials, and by teachers in their infrequent non-teaching periods. The English department has a reputation for excellence.

As Figure 3.2 shows, in Kate's classroom the desks are usually arranged so that students can sit and work in groups of two, four, or six. The room is not big enough to allow the kind of flexibility she would like, but it is pleasant and well lit by large windows along the back wall. Student writing, posters, pictures, and notices are pinned on bulletin boards which take up most of the wall space.

Their Classes

Since GATE students can select programs in schools outside their neighborhood, half of Judy's class comes from other parts of San Francisco, skewing the ethnic composition of her class in favor of students from white, middle-class families (56% in her GATE exchange class as compared to 18% for the school). As Table 2.2 shows, the exchange class is also 25% Chicano/Latino, close to the school population of 35%; 14% African American, close to the 18% for the school; and 6% Asian, much lower than the 30% for the school.

Although the sixth-grade exchange class is labelled GATE, almost half of the students have not been officially designated as gifted by the school district.[6] These non-designated students have been admitted into the GATE program because of parental pressure or because they came from private schools and have not been officially tested by the school district or recommended by a district teacher but have been recommended by their private school teacher. The GATE staff invites some students, especially ethnic minorities, into the program on a trial basis because the staff thinks these students would do well in the program. Finally, some students are placed in the

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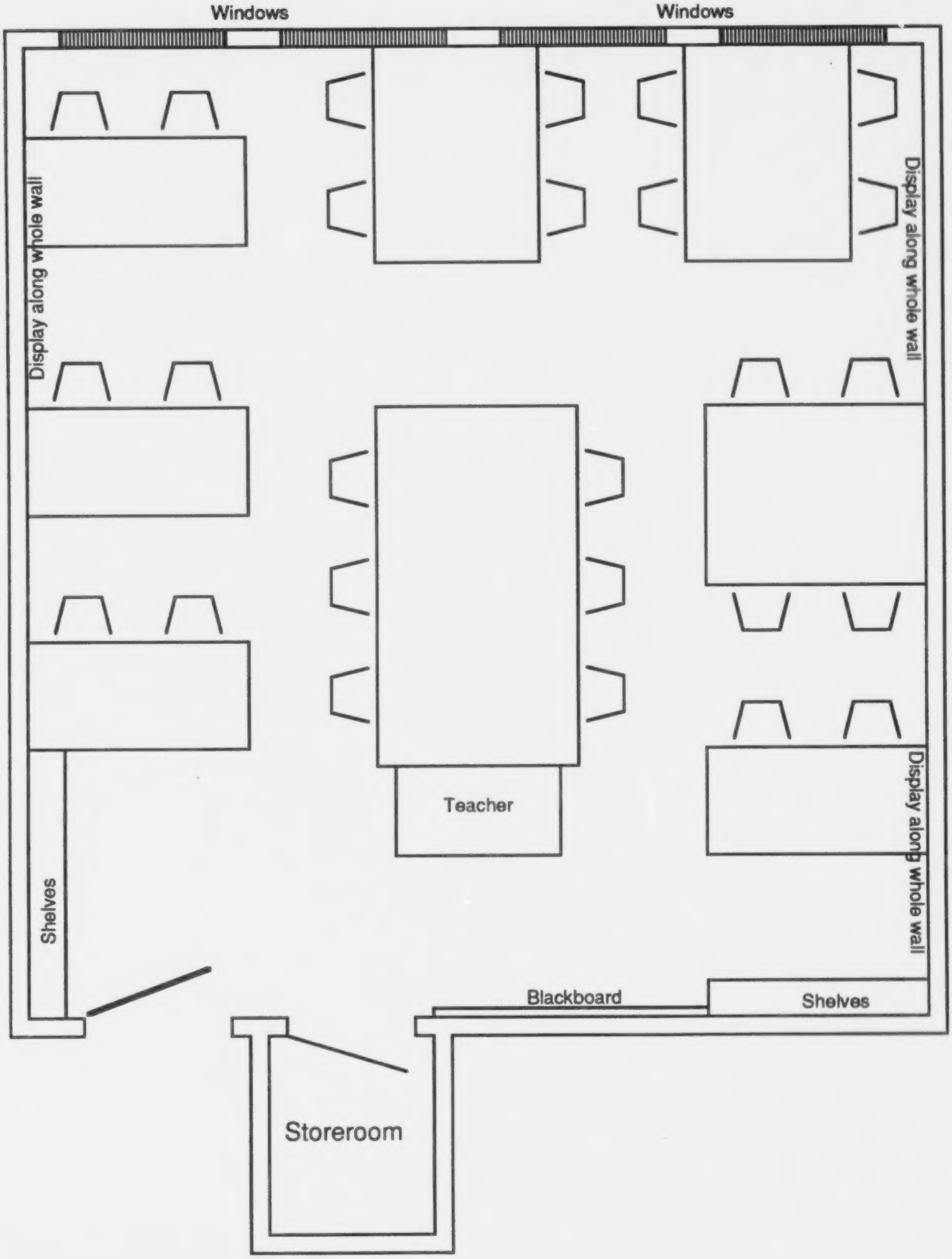
[6] Students are designated as gifted if they fall in the top 2% of the students in the school district for their age. This designation is determined either by scores on an IQ test, by scores on the California Test of Basic Skills (over 90% in at least three subjects for at least three years), or by teacher recommendation. Criteria are shifted to include additional members from ethnic groups that traditionally score below the group norms on standardized tests.

Figure 3.2: Kate Chapman's Classroom


Windows
Windows
Display along whole wall
Display along whole wall
Teacher
Display along whole wall
Shelves
Blackboard
Shelves
Storeroom

class for no discernable academic reason—either through scheduling convenience or placement errors.

Like all the British classes in the exchange, Kate's class is mixed ability. The group of 25 students is seventh grade equivalent, a year older than Judy's students, and as Table 2.2 indicates includes 10 white students (40%), five bilingual students who come from Cyprus and are of Greek or Turkish origin (20%); six black students, five from the Caribbean and one from Mauritius (24%), and four bilingual students from South Asia (16%). Taken together, the South Asian and Cyprus students make the class 36% bilingual. The group is evenly divided between males and females, with 13 males and 12 females. Kate's class reflects the composition of her school.

Comparing Institutional Contexts

A synthesis of the background data for these two exchange classes provides preliminary information for addressing the first research question about the institutional supports and constraints on the teaching and learning of writing in the United States and the United Kingdom. The salient differences in the greater instructional contexts that stand out will be discussed in this section. They include the following: (a) while both Kate and Judy see their main professional role as classroom teacher, both take on added professional roles; these added roles differ in how the two teachers relate institutionally to their everyday school lives, with Kate's external professional activities well-integrated with her normal school duties and with Judy's more separated; (b) each teacher assumes external professional duties that have no equivalent in the other country; (c) both teachers work within institutional structures that support them in getting to know their individual students, but Judy's structure is of her own making, which she sustains with the help of only a few other colleagues, while Kate's structure is a normal part of the school organization; and (d) Judy's classroom community is organized by a school philosophy that supports homogeneous grouping while Kate's is organized by a philosophy designed to support heterogeneous grouping.

Teachers' Professional Roles: Separated or Integrated

Both of these teachers are extremely busy, with important external professional commitments added on to already heavy teaching schedules. The nature of their professional activities, however, highlight important differences in the ways schools are organized in the United States and the United Kingdom. In the first place one of Judy's main professional activities, her work in women's studies, is almost completely separated from the structure of her school. Although she brings much of what she learns to her own teaching and even spreads some to other teachers at her school, her teaching job does not demand that she continue her interest in women's studies. Judy's other major activity involves her work for the GATE program. This activity is integral to the programmatic offerings at Everett; however, GATE classes are an extra in terms of the school offerings. As a special program, GATE fully involves only about four teachers and 20% of the student body. The program is important to the school but is not at its institutional core and is often threatened with extinction. All in all, Judy gets significant recognition for her professional leadership outside her school community both for her work in gifted education and in women's studies, but within the school's bounds there is no serious formal structure to support her professional activities and little recognition for them.

By contrast, in her work with the examination system, Kate's professional activities are essential to and fully integrated with the running of the academic programs at her school. Almost every teacher and all students are involved in the examination program. If Kate did not sit on these examination committees, someone else would have to. Kate's leadership is recognized and considered important both within her school and outside its bounds. Although not integral to the workings of her school in the same way as her work on the examinations, even Kate's work with LATE fulfills a social function for other English teachers at her school since many are members of LATE and attend and appreciate the conferences she helps organize.

New Professional Roles

Besides her roles with the British examination system, also important to note is another role Kate fulfills that is largely missing in American schools. She supervises "probationers" or first-year teachers. In Great Britain newly qualified teachers in their first year of teaching are on probation—that is, full certification depends on satisfactory performance over the year. During the probationary period a new teacher, on full salary, has a reduced teaching load and meets regularly with other probationers in group seminars where they have guest speakers and where they discuss issues of common concern. As the teacher in charge of probationers, Kate serves as an official advisor to the new teachers, routinely visiting their classes and supervising their teaching. At the end of the year, Kate, the English department head, the head of the school, and the local education authority advisor evaluate the progress of the probationer. Probationers normally pass, or may have the probation period extended, or in rare cases fail. Kate's supervisory role provides both an important professional opportunity for her as an experienced teacher and an important way to support new teachers in making a smooth and maximally successful transition to teaching. Judy does supervise student teachers, helps them get their first jobs, and spends much time counseling them early on in their careers. But beyond the initial supervision, her work with them is done without formal institutional support or recognition, essentially as a volunteer effort for the profession.

Missing in British schools is the role of mentor teacher that Judy assumes. The mentor teacher program is a relatively new professional development effort funded by the California State Department of Education. Each year the program awards extra salary to a select group of teachers with special expertise and interesting ideas for projects that will benefit the profession. As a mentor teacher, Judy developed and tested in her classroom curricular materials for women's studies, offered workshops to numerous teachers in the San Francisco Unified School District, gave a number of other presentations, conducted a year-long workshop for teachers for two years running in which teachers met monthly to discuss issues in women's studies, and collected curricular resources which other teachers could borrow.

Getting to Know Students: School and Curricular Organization

Judy and Kate both work within institutional structures that allow them to get to know their students as individuals, and both value this ongoing contact with their students. Although Kate teaches in a large comprehensive secondary school her school is divided into smaller units of year groups and then seven or eight tutor groups within each year. This organization is part of the system of pastoral care. Each year group is organized by a head and deputy head and has periodic meetings across the year. Students also participate in their regular work with their tutor groups (see footnote 4 for explanation of tutor groups). They take most of their classes with their tutor group for their first three years and stay in the same tutor group across five years of secondary school, that is through Form 5 which is the end of the GCSE course. They also have the same "form tutor" or teacher who looks after their class every year. Although the exchange group is not Kate's tutor group and although she has only four hours a week with them and has less flexibility in the amount of time available to spend on the exchange, she will teach this same group for another year, and the students being in a tutor group together know one another well.[7]

In the U.S. Judy teaches in a much smaller middle school, covering only three grade levels, six through eight. Also, within the GATE program her students live within a smaller unit, even within this relatively small school. The GATE program provides students with a close community since the same group of students take GATE classes and since only a few teachers at the school teach in the program. GATE teachers come to know the children in the program well, often seeing them in more than one class across the three years they are at Everett. Judy will likely see many of her same students again in elective courses that she will teach over the next two years.

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[7] Kate normally would have taught this group the year before, but she took them over from a new teacher because in his first year he found the group difficult to handle and thought they would benefit from a change of teachers.

Heterogeneous versus Homogeneous Learning Communities

Although a supportive community life is available for both Kate's and Judy's students, the nature of the community varies, given differences in the institutional structures and values. In particular, the class group in the United States is planned to be intellectually homogeneous whereas the group in Britain is purposefully planned to be heterogeneous. Judy's school has a plethora of special programs, such as GATE for gifted students and programs for bilingual education and other kinds of special education, as well as other federal and state supported programs; these government-funded programs are of a sort that are practically non-existent in Great Britain. By contrast, in Kate's school just as physically handicapped students are mainstreamed so are bilingual students; instead of being in special programs, they receive support with their regular class work as needed. Rather than specially funded programs, then, in England there is funding for special support teachers who come into the regular classroom. While Judy's school is tracked, Kate's school implements and is philosophically committed to mixed ability teaching.

The U.S. Focal Students

In Judy's class we will follow four focal students: two males, Iggy and Torch, and two females, Belle and Elizabeth. All are white except Torch who is half white, half African American.

Iggy

An only child who lives with his mother, Iggy was born in Toronto, Canada. Iggy was taken for the first two years of his life to Aruba, his mother's birthplace, before he moved with her to San Francisco. Also living with Iggy and his mother is a female co-parent who observed Judy's class and decided on this GATE program for him.

In his autobiography Iggy expresses his hopes for his future:

> At the age of 25 I will be a world class gymnast. I will go to the Olympics and win a gold medal. Outside of my gymnastics, I will work as a special effects director. . . . I'll have a beautiful house in Marin. I'll have a beautiful wife and two children. . . . [M]y wife will be a fashion designer.

In addition to gymnastics, Iggy's hobbies include playing video games and reading horror comic books. He also enjoys making special horror effects. He explains these effects: "I take latex. It's this kind of rubber stuff that I put on my face and bloody it all up and it looks all cut up" (Interview, April 5, 1988). As he admits in a February 24, 1988, letter to a student in the United Kingdom, "I love Blood and gore." Judy confirms that Iggy writes best about imaginative and "disgusting" topics. She explains that "he writes about things like . . . bringing home a pet rat, and then the little sister eats it, thinking it's chicken, and I mean just really disgusting things" (Interview, July 20, 1988).

Judy characterizes Iggy as a "reluctant writer" who "often puts barriers in his way to make things harder for himself in one way or another" (Interview, February 24, 1988). Consistent with his interest in horror, Judy says that as a writer "he wants to say something shocking, or he wants say something horrible, but he doesn't want to sustain it. . . . He can't focus on anything for very long, and he doesn't sustain interest in anything very long" (Interview, February 24, 1988). Iggy reveals to the research team that he enjoys parts of the writing for the exchange. He likes writing letters which he says are "informal" and writing stories because they allow him to be "creative"; he dislikes the rest of the writing he does for school, labelling it "serious" (Interviews, April 5 and June 13, 1988). He also enjoys drawing and appreciates the artwork that comes from the U.K. Judy also reports, "he's a reader; he loves to read Stephen King."

Judy notes that Iggy had a particularly difficult time becoming a productive member of the class. In her journal, she traces Iggy's rough start; Iggy is one of the few students she takes particular note of during the first few days of school. In her initial journal entry about the first day of school, she writes that Iggy gets in a fight during get-acquainted interviews:

> During interviewing time, Robbie hits Iggy, because his questions are things like how many pimples do you have? How long are your earlobes? etc. I talk to Robbie about better ways to solve problems than hitting, I talk to Iggy about doing an interview so that the person feels proud and respected.
>
> —I notice that Iggy's printing looks large, uneven, labored, like 2nd grade work. (Journal, September 10, 1987)

In the same entry, Judy notes that Iggy and three other students will need "special attention." On the second day of school Judy writes that she helps Iggy during journal writing time since he doesn't seem to be able to sustain the activity: "I give suggestions to Iggy on how to continue. I compliment him on fluency" (Journal, September 10, 1987). She also reports that she finds Iggy upset in the hall because he is late for class and confused about his schedule; he thought he was supposed to be in P.E. when he was really supposed to be somewhere else. Judy comforts him. Over the next few days Judy's journal entries show Iggy continuing to stand out because of the disruptive ways he seeks attention. In her journal on September 21, Judy reports, "Spoke with his counselor this a.m. about his class journal, have decided to temporarily ignore grossness, rudeness, etc." By September 24, Judy writes:

> Iggy comes up to me privately and tells me that it always takes him awhile to settle into a new class, but not to worry, he is going to get much better. I am glad to hear this.

Although Iggy indeed gets better, in her May interview Judy still reports, "He's very needy, and I think in some ways he's used to getting attention in a negative way instead of a positive way."

Although never an easy student, Iggy seems to find his place as a productive, if sometimes reluctant, member of the class.

Belle

Like Iggy, Belle is an only child who lives with her mother. She loves to dance and plays soccer on an organized team. She also enjoys horseback riding and reading. Not identified by test scores as a gifted student, Belle is probably the student in Judy's class most excited about the exchange project. At the start of the year, she writes in her journal:

> I am really excited about reciving their autobiographies from England. I am really interested in how they look and live.

Judy observes Belle's enthusiasm too:

> When she knows that something's coming in, she meets me at the main office in the morning: "Do you have it yet? Has it come in yet? Aren't you excited that Marcia [the research assistant from U.C. Berkeley] has it, that it's coming in?" (Interview, May 19, 1988)

According to Judy, Belle is also one of the students who benefitted the most from the exchange. Judy explains that Belle had difficulties getting along with the other sixth grade girls in her class but that she found a social place in the exchange:

> It's almost like this distance that she has with the people in England has allowed her to become really friendly and popular, in a way that she hasn't been with the group. (Interview, May 19, 1988)

Belle is sensitive to her U.K. readers' feelings, telling the research team how she makes adjustments when she writes for the U.K. audience:

> You have to be very careful about what you write too, because it may offend them. Yeah, I mean like if you wrote well I don't like tea, or . . . you eat tea and crumpets everyday, that may like offend them or something. (March 24, 1988)

Across the year, Belle's growing popularity with the U.K. students raises her social standing with the girls in her own class.

Torch

The son of a white mother and African American father, Torch was born in the same city as his mother, in upper New York state. He lived there with both his parents until he was two, when his mother moved alone with him to San Francisco. In his autobiography Torch describes himself: "I have black hair and brown eyes. I am black." Torch enjoys collecting comic books; playing basketball, soccer, and baseball; and playing the game Dungeons and Dragons. Torch is known as a computer whiz; Iggy says that Torch even sells the other boys tips for how to beat popular computer games. Torch later reveals that his favorite sport is basketball which he plays all the time. At one point he even says, "I want to be a basketball player when I grow up" (Interview, May 16, 1988). In his autobiography, though, Torch imagines his future as president of a conglomerate:

> We will own toys, banks, movies, video games, foods, and other companies. We will have to go under different names because people aren't supposed to own all those things at once. . . . The movies my company will make, I will be in. . . . Also at twenty five I will be engaged.

Judy says that Torch's fifth grade teacher told her that Torch "didn't do anything in the fifth grade," (Interview, May 19, 1988), but Torch has begun to try harder this year because he has decided that he wants to be a writer. However, Judy notes in February, "He's been working for me, not consistently, but mostly working for me. . . . Torch marches to his own drummer" (Interview, February 24, 1988). Again in May she says, "He's still real hot and cold. I mean sometimes he just does nothing. And sometimes he does really really well. . . . I don't know what his block is, but . . . he reminds me of just a big mountain that's immoveable sometimes" (Interview, May 19, 1988). Judy works hard to encourage Torch's writing by providing special opportunities for him. For example, when then mayor of San Francisco Diane Feinstein visited Everett, Judy sent Torch and another student as "reporters" to collect facts of the visit for the rest of the class.

Judy sees Torch as a "talented" student who is "coming out . . . from a reluctant writer's stage" (Interview February 24, 1988). Torch shows his talents early on when he reveals a strong sense of his audience in his autobiography. He reaches for something unexpected, explicitly revealing his motives when he explains why he wrote about his friend in his "Favorite Person" section: "I would have written this about my Mom, but I bet most of the class is writing about their parents." Like Iggy, Torch reveals to the research team that he prefers writing "things that we can make up," but unlike Iggy, Torch finds formal autobiographical writing enjoyable. He continues, "It could be true, like . . . one of our funnest times, or a good trip we took—like those kinds of assignments, that we can tell about times we've had" (Interview, April 5, 1988).

Elizabeth

Judy reports that Elizabeth is one of the more mature and versatile writers in her class:

> Elizabeth is a wonderful writer, a wonderful reader. She's one of my best. . . . She's just an innocent, open child still and very straightforward and talented. (Interview, February 24, 1988)

Elizabeth lives with her mother, father, and younger brother and sister. She was born in San Francisco, moved to Los Angeles when she was three where she lived until she was in the fifth grade, the year before she entered Judy's class. Elizabeth writes in her journal that she is now "making alot of new friends." She also tells Judy that she enjoys writing fiction and hopes to have an opportunity to write stories during the year. In a letter to U.K. student Helen, Elizabeth reveals that she likes to think of herself as a creative person. In her first interview with the research team she says she wants to be an actress, a writer, or a child psychologist. In her autobiography she expands these thoughts:

> I decided to be a child psychologist because I enjoy helping people with their problems, and this is a job which will reward me, not only with money, but which will reward me with the fact that this is a job I feel good about having. . . . I plan to write a book on child psychology and also a few fiction books. One of my books will be on the list of the top ten best sellers (hopefully).

Elizabeth also enjoys jump-rope and handball. Her hobbies include belonging to a "political children's group," the Red Dragons, and writing. According to Elizabeth, the Red Dragons have organized a demonstration against war toys and collected "pennies for pencils" for children in Nicaragua and El Salvador.

Judy notes that Elizabeth's writing is "generally longer and reflects more time and effort" than that of the other students (Interview, May 19, 1988). During the year, Elizabeth wins second place in an essay contest sponsored by the San Francisco chapter of the National Organization for Women. She also reports having written stories for a friend in Los Angeles to read, illustrate, and return. Elizabeth has kept all of her writing in what she calls her "writing folder," dating from the time that she was so young that she had to dictate her stories to her mother. As Judy says, Elizabeth is the "good girl who does what she's supposed to" (Interview, May 19, 1988). And according to Elizabeth, participating in the writing exchange causes her to work even harder than she normally does: "I worked a little harder on my things because they were . . . going to be reading them, and I wanted to impress them" (Interview, March 24, 1988).

The Exchange

To address the two research questions from a vantage point inside the classroom, we next follow the exchanges across time, looking particularly at the experiences of the four focal students in Judy's class. The first question concerns how institutional constraints and supports (previewed in the background section and further elaborated here) affect the teaching and learning of writing in the classroom. The second question concerns the writing development of the focal students and those classroom-based cultural practices that support their development.

First we present an overview for the exchange, showing how the two teachers and their students negotiated the exchange as an activity, including how they fit it into their overall curriculum. Next the exchange writing is presented chronologically, as it unfolds for each of the focal students. We see how each piece of writing is framed in Judy's classroom, the resultant writing that is sent from the United States, the British responses to it, and the British writing that comes and the responses in Judy's class to this writing from abroad.

Overview for the Exchange

Since Judy and Kate are the only exchange teachers who work together during the first as well as this second year of the project, they start out this second year familiar with one another's working routines. Having spent time together in England during the summer before the 1987-88 exchange year, they make a number of plans for the upcoming school year. As an added bonus, since British schools are still in session when Judy arrives in England in early July, Judy visits Kate's exchange class from the 1986-87 year. Although Kate considered not participating in the exchange the second year because she felt overwhelmed by teaching responsibilities, at the July, 1987 teachers' meeting in London she concludes, "Meeting Judy, with all her enthusiasm, there was no way that I could refuse." Because of their growing relationship, Judy and Kate have been able to experiment with and refine across time the way they use the exchange in their classrooms.

Timeline

Judy and Kate plan for their classes to send at least four exchanges of writing during the 1987-88 exchange year—two during the first semester and two during the second. As Figure 3.3 shows, Judy's students exceed their teacher's goals, sending three pieces in the first semester—name papers, spooky tales and autobiographies—and one set of responses to the British name papers. They also send three pieces in the second semester—a set about women in history, dramatic monologues, and goodbye letters—and another set of responses, these to the British autobiographies. Kate's group sends name papers and responses to the American name papers in the first semester. In the second semester the British students send autobiographies; women in history papers; final letters; and elaborate, teen-type magazines. They also respond to the American autobiographies. Like Judy's group Kate's too achieve more than Kate had planned.

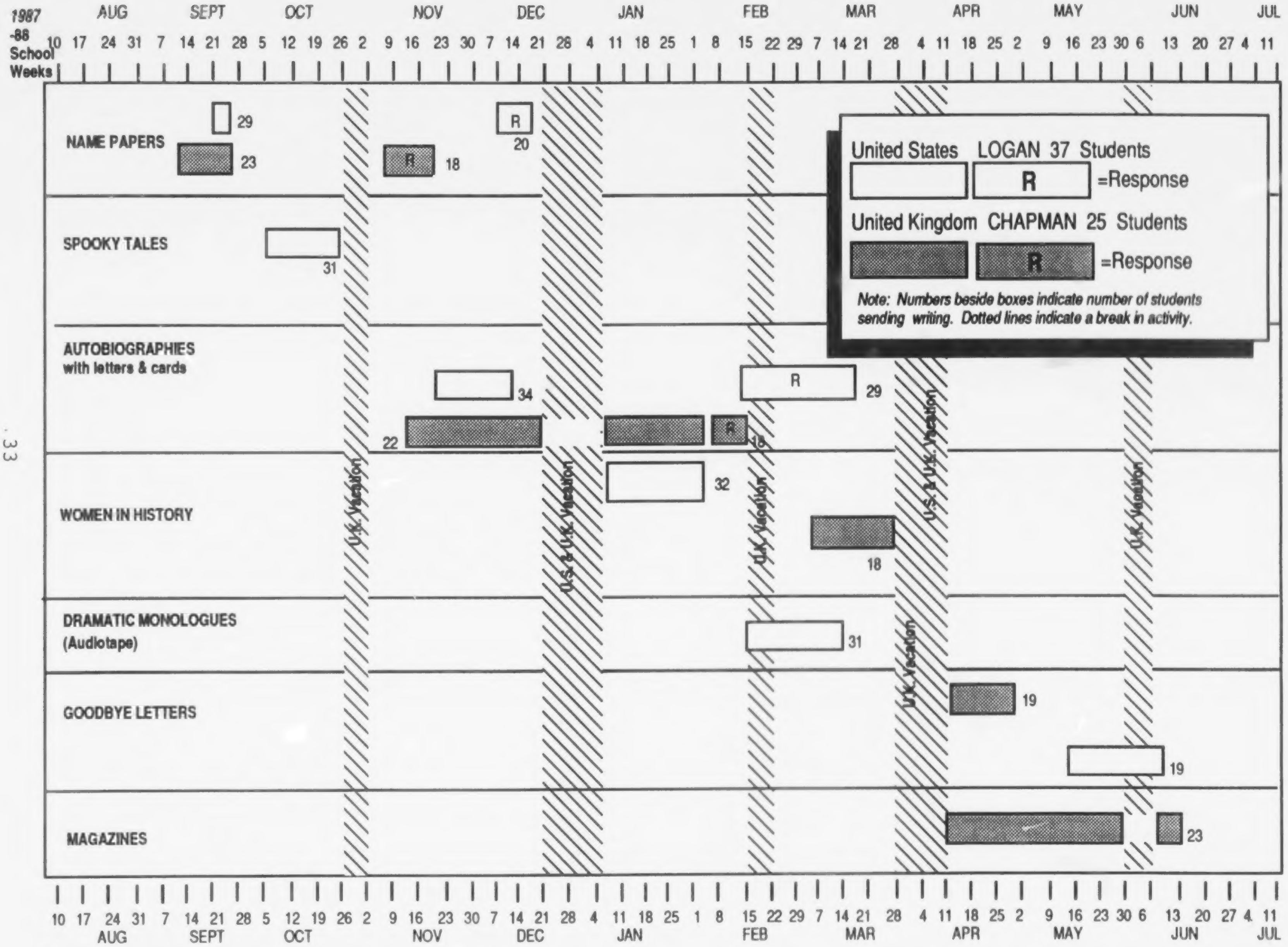
Word Counts

Table 3.1 shows the relative lengths of two pieces sent by Judy's and Kate's students, the autobiographies and the women in history papers. These pieces are the two most parallel from the two classes. Judy's students, although a year younger than Kate's, write slightly more than Kate's on average.

Organizing The Exchange

Melding the Exchange with the Regular Curriculum: Gradual Integration. For some time Judy had been providing external audiences for her students' writing—beginning with the class as audience, moving outside to have their spooky tales judged by other teachers in the school to create a local contest, and finally moving to an audience outside the school when she submitted her students' writing in the spring to the annual National Organization for Women essay contest (her students generally won awards). The exchange fit perfectly with Judy's ongoing routines. Judging by the writing topics, one would not think Judy was experimenting much. In fact, her students write on the same topics for the exchange as her other classes had written on in previous years. In her interview with Ellie O'Sullivan, Judy explains how she proceeded during the first year of the exchange:

> I didn't change what I was going to do in the classroom. In order to send stuff to Kate, I simply sent what we were already doing. (Interview, January 18, 1989)



1987 -88 School Weeks
AUG SEPT OCT NOV DEC JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL
10 17 24 31 7 14 21 28 5 12 19 26 2 9 16 23 30 7 14 21 28 4 11 18 25 1 8 15 22 29 7 14 21 28 4 11 18 25 2 9 16 23 30 6 13 20 27 4 11
NAME PAPERS
29
23
R
18
R
20
SPOOKY TALES
31
AUTOBIOGRAPHIES with letters & cards
34
22
R
29
R
18
WOMEN IN HISTORY
32
18
DRAMATIC MONOLOGUES (Audiotape)
31
GOODBYE LETTERS
19
19
MAGAZINES
23
U.K. Vacation
U.S. & U.K. Vacation
U.K. Vacation
U.K. Vacation
U.S. & U.K. Vacation
U.K. Vacation
United States LOGAN 37 Students
R =Response
United Kingdom CHAPMAN 25 Students
R =Response
Note: Numbers beside boxes indicate number of students sending writing. Dotted lines indicate a break in activity.

Table 3.1

Autobiography and Women in History: US/UK Focal Students' Word Counts

		AUTO-BIOGRAPHIES	WOMEN IN HISTORY	TOTAL WORDS FOR EACH FOCAL STUDENT
LOGAN	Belle Sullivan	935	658	1,593
	Torch Johnson	2,815	477	3,292
	Elizabeth	2,949	1,096	4,045
	Iggy	1,714	243	1,957
CHAPMAN	**Farah**	**2,016**	**518**	**2,534**
	Daniel/ Veronica	**2,429**	**803**	**3,232**
	Helen	**2,144**	**366**	**2,510**
	Christos/ Kenneth	**1,282**	**357**	**1,639**
TOTAL, LOGAN FOCAL STUDENTS		8,413	2,474	10,887
TOTAL, CHAPMAN FOCAL STUDENTS		**7,871**	**2,044**	**9,915**

At first Judy did not tailor her activities to the exchange because communication between her and Kate was slow in starting; in effect, she began the school year with her regular lesson plans, making only minor allowances for the exchange. In this, the second year, since Judy knew well in advance that she would be involved in the exchange and since she had already established an excellent rapport with Kate, planning different activities for the exchange would have been possible. However, the same kinds of pieces reappear—name papers, spooky tales, autobiographies, women in history, and dramatic monologues. The difference is that this time Kate reciprocates with some of these same lessons, many of them new to her, as well as other activities of her own. In essence, Judy is able to maintain her curriculum by negotiating with Kate to adopt some of her activities and parallel a number of her routines. In their third year which they continue independent of the research teams, Judy reports that she, Kate, and their students designed several new activities especially for the exchange.

Integrating the Social and the Academic: Pairing Individuals. What changed substantially across the course of the two exchange years was a growing and urgent need to deal with the social side of learning to write. Together Judy and Kate thought carefully about both the kinds of academic opportunities the exchanges allow and what is involved in embedding those activities in the social lives of the students. Students' social needs are many and varied and require definition. Both Kate and Judy think broadly about these needs and definitions. As a base, they consider their students' needs to establish personal relationships with their readers. They then work towards enacting a curriculum that will help students participate in the social and intellectual worlds of their communities. This second kind of social activity becomes entwined with intellectual activity as students use language, including their writing, to reflect on their worlds and to find a social place for themselves within the culture of the classroom and the community at large. These students use writing to share their ideas, hopes, and dreams.

When the research team and teachers organized the first-year exchanges, all aspects of its social side received too little attention. The research team and teachers were explicitly trying to avoid simply creating pen pal exchanges since the goal was to help students learn to meet the needs of a distant and general audience, something that could not be accomplished through personal letter writing. The result was that we decided that all individual connections between students would be "on the side," not an official part of the exchange. Students could send one another their home addresses, and unofficially exchange personal letters, but what we "counted" for the exchange was the serious academic work. In their first year, Kate and Judy, like the other teachers, did not encourage individual correspondence. Although a number of students wrote personal letters, they did not always find it easy to get the addresses and establish the contacts on their own. And the students were frustrated. In her report after two years of the exchange, Kate traces these conflicts and their resolution (see Chapman, "The Response Factor" in Part 2 of this report):

> I felt conflicting pressures on me: I wanted my students' writing to be as good as it possibly could be within the framework of the project as I perceived it. . . . To write back to the students in a more informal way I felt would contradict the premise that they were not to be "pen pals". Yet it is obvious that I felt strongly the students' desire to be able to respond in more spontaneous and personal ways. This conflict was an area which occupied much of our discussions at the Institute that first year. It was partially resolved for me by Ellie at a meeting on the 14th of July 1987, who said,
>
>> One of the things that hopefully the project is about is confirming the students as writers, and it seems to me that they have their oral response, and they chat amongst themselves, about it, but it would be nice if the students in the exchange actually got a piece of semi-formal or formal work which recognized the content of their writing in a serious way and was developed. (Chapman, p. 2)

What Kate recognized was the fact that not only were students' social need to establish personal connections not being fulfilled, but an important academic resource was being wasted as well—response from the student readers.

Ostensibly, this constraint—that the exchange is not mainly for establishing pen pals—was imposed for academic reasons—to encourage writing to a distant and general audience. But the result was the unintended obstruction of not only creating a personal/social base but also another academic need within the exchange—that of encouraging the students to respond to one another's writing and thereby helping them come to see the needs of a distant reader and imagine their lives. Kate continues:

> The whole issue of response was firmly put high on the agenda for the following year. By this time I was convinced that the only way forward was to set up a situation which would automatically produce the personal responses I had come to see as necessary for a fully successful exchange. For me this meant "pairing up" the students wherever possible . . . Theirs would be the ultimate responsibility for reading and responding to another's work. Others would have access but the final responsibility towards individual writers would belong to them. (Chapman, p. 2)

Thus, for the 1987-88 exchanges, Judy and Kate assigned each student a response partner. These partners wrote each other letters. In them, they respond to one another's writing, as interested readers, not as evaluators or critics, and they write about other personal concerns. Since Kate had 25 students and Judy had 37, some British students were assigned more than one American student. It took some time for all American students to receive mail from a British partner, with some students having no partner for much of the year. Those students who were inadvertently left out, or even those who received no mail when others did, felt unrecognized. Although not without their complications, these pairings also began a number of friendships as well as some serious long-distance dialogues about writing. Kate explains:

> Hopefully, having personal access to a student would build the confidence to develop a meaningful dialogue. It would provide opportunities to raise and answer questions about the content of work and to include personal responses to what had been written. I felt that this potentially addressed the notion of an audience exchange project being a two way process—that of sending and receiving others' work. I knew how to support students in completing writing to be sent but not about supporting them in responding to what had been received. (Chapman, p. 3)

For her sixth graders, Judy saw another reason for setting up one-to-one connections, arguing that the students' social comfort and knowledge of audience lay the foundation for academic comfort and growth:

> I think that first year when we were writing to the class as a whole, they [the students] felt a little overwhelmed by this whole class that would be reading their work, and this anonymous audience, which was corrected the second year, when Kate and I . . . matched up one child to one child. And that . . . seemed to solve all those problems about having this overwhelming blank mass audience that they were sending their work to. Once they . . . connected up with an individual, and they knew the person they were sending their work to, they no longer had those inhibitions, or those fears of criticism. (Interview, January 18, 1989)

Especially for these youngest students in the exchange, Judy and Kate agree that these response letters, additions to the central pieces of writing for the exchange, improved the experience for their students in the second year. After receiving a letter from Kate, Judy reported at a February, 1988 teachers' meeting:

> [Kate] thinks that [the audience exchange] is much more positive this year and she attributes that, and I agree with her, to the fact that we hooked up two individuals almost immediately. . . . What really struck me is the good will which seems to have been generated from both classes.

Pairing students takes much coordination and communication on the part of the classroom teachers. This approach also makes much of the success of the exchange dependent on what happens in another class in another country, a risky venture. Kate and Judy could manage this approach as well as they did in large part because they had a well-established relationship themselves and were in close communication with one another. In the end, though, their ability to establish this personal/social base motivated their students and provided a context in which their students could use writing to reflect on themselves and their worlds.

Writing for the Exchange

The length of each piece of writing sent by the focal students in Judy's class is presented on Table 3.2. There is a fair amount of variation across the students. Elizabeth is the most prolific on every topic, with Torch following close behind her. Even the less prolific Belle and Iggy send close to 3,000 words to the British class. Of the eight packets mailed, few students miss sending something.

Name Papers

For a number of years Judy's students routinely began their year by writing about their names. When she and Kate first started their exchange in 1986-87, Judy sent her students' name papers as the first exchange piece, although Kate did not send anything parallel. For the 1987-88 exchange, Kate decided to begin her students' year with name papers as well.

In these papers students in both countries discuss topics such as how their parents decided on their names, historical or religious significance to their names, their nicknames, feelings about their names, and their favorite names. These papers are generally brief, ranging from one to five paragraphs, with the majority under one handwritten page. Most from England also include an illustrated cover page and often other illustrations. Judy's students do not illustrate theirs.

The Writing. Judy's students spend three concentrated days of three-period blocks writing their name papers and get them in the mail by the end of September. Since Kate's class meets only four hours a week, with one of those hours for reading in the library, her group spends an equivalent amount of time but works on the name papers over two weeks. They too mail theirs in late September.

In Judy's class Elizabeth's paper is almost twice as long as those of the other focal students. It covers many of the usual topics but with more elaboration. She writes most fully about changing her name to Nicole. She offers her reasons:

> If I could change my name I would change it to Nicole for two reasons. One is I like the name. The other is becouse Nicole is a name that sounds like how its spelled so its easy to pronounce correctly unlike my name.[8]

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[8] Students write about their real names, not their pseudonyms. Elizabeth's real name is unusual and its pronunciation is not clear from its spelling.

Table 3.2
Number of Words

	BELLE	ELIZABETH	IGGY	TORCH
NAME PAPERS	126	228	119	142
RESPONSE TO NAME PAPERS	283	----	68	184
SPOOKY TALES [2nd Tale]	241	853 [742]	352	1,003 [380]
AUTOBIOGRAPHIES	935	2,949	1,714	2,815
RESPONSE TO AUTOBIOGRAPHIES	372	431	231	----
WOMEN IN HISTORY	658	1,096	243	477
DRAMATIC MONOLOGUES	119	749	121	206
GOODBYE LETTERS	70	----	29	----
TOTAL	2,805	6,306 [7,048]	2,877	4,827 [5,207]

She then explains that people find her name difficult to pronounce and gives a number of funny examples of mispronunciations and her embarrassment. After telling about the origins of her names, she says, "Some people used to call me . . . even though I always hated it. Some kids still try to tease me about it."[9]

In contrast to Elizabeth, Belle writes only the following about changing her name: "I don't think I'd want to change my name. If I had to change, I'd change it to Adreinne." Belle's level of detail is just as sparse when she writes about her nickname: "My mom calls me S.K. and Space Kadet. My friend call me . . . and . . . and my grandma calls me punkin."

Torch and Iggy mention nothing about changing their names, but both write about their nicknames. Iggy reveals:

> I have a couple of nicknames. One one of them is Bebe. They called me that because when I would go into a toy store I would want to buy every toy gun in site.

But Torch, whose writing is elaborated like Elizabeth's, provides detail about his nickname Torch, which is also his pseudonym:

> My nickname is TORCH as in BLOWTORCH. I got the name from a role playing game called Dungeons and Dragons. Torch is the name of my most powerful character in the world of Dungeons and Dragons. TORCH is second in command of the world and the ruler of magic.

Torch begins his name paper with an engaging discussion of his pride in being named for a "black statesman and politician" who "was a spokesman for equal rights and worked hard to reduce discrimination."

In England, Farah's name paper illustrates the elaborate end of the writing from Kate's class. It is a full page and contains several, sometimes humorous, anecdotes about her name:

> My parents chose my names with ease, so my mother tells me, they didn't really argue, if they did my dad might have got a few blackeyes! Note: My mum does not dominate my father.

About her nicknames she is disarmingly honest:

> My nicknames I don't mind, Faty or most people call me pig as if to make fun of me. I just dont take any notice of them. Or I give them a piece of my mind. Not that it results in violence. I suppose I got these nicknames because I'm fat. Half the boys in my class take the micky out of me being fat but as I said, I dont take any notice. People I know who dont call me name are what I call friends like . . .

And then she lists her friends. Farah's graphics consist of brightly colored curly lines which circle her names and her friends' names. Not surprisingly, she does not circle her nicknames.

At the other end of the British continuum is Mark's piece. In 58 words, he explains the "Irish and Welsh" origins of his name. Then he reveals that his nickname is "BL" and explains "it stands for Bumble Lion." Mark concludes that he likes his nickname. He illustrates his page with several fingerprints, a small pair of eyeglasses, and what appear to be several tiny space creatures.

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[9] The ellipsis is used where names occur to protect the student's identity.

At the bottom of the page, wedged between a drawing of a hand and a fingerprint, is the word "space," underlined twice. At the top is a sketch of a face, with the initials "BL" beside it.

There are two main contrasts in the writing from the two countries. No students in the United States adopt as relaxed and playful a style as Farah does; the tone of the writing from Judy's class is relatively formal. Second, Judy's students do not use illustrations to accompany their writing.

Reception of the British Writing: Student Impressions about Differences from Lexical Items to Illustrations. When the name papers arrive in Judy's class, Elizabeth reports, "The name papers, you know we read them outloud to the class. So I heard everyone's for that" (Interview, March 24, 1988). Judy's students are impressed by unfamiliar lexical items (e.g., "mum" instead of "mom" and "tippex" instead of "white out") and by the illustrations. None remark on issues of tone. Elizabeth comments on the lexical items in Farah's paper:

> Today my teacher read some papers from England out loud. And I read a paper from Farah to myself. I learned many things about England like they call there mothers mum and call there last names sur names. I also learned things about Farah and her name. I'm glad I got a chance to read her paper. (Journal, October 8, 1987)

Judy's students are extremely impressed by the British students' tendency to punctuate their writing with drawings and graphic decorations. In fact, every U.S. focal student notices and remarks about the graphic aspect of British composing and imitates it as the year goes on. Elizabeth writes about Joanna's graphics in her October 7 journal entry, "I like the way she borders her paper with the names of people in her class." On the same day Torch writes about Mark, "I think he's kind of an artist." After reading Helen's paper, Belle writes, "I think that we should a decorated our papers." Although Iggy does not keep a journal, he comments in an interview about Kuldeep's artwork, which he is surprised to find resembles graffiti art common in the Bay Area:

> They like, like you know how to say it, you know what tag is? And graffiti, . . . I didn't know that they kind of liked that. . . . I saw Kuldeep's pictures, and they kind of resembled that. (Interview, April 5, 1988)

Response from Great Britain: Initiating the Response Dialogue. In November, Kate's students write their first formal response letters to their partners. These letters mark the beginning of a response dialogue and often a personal dialogue between students in these two classes. Kate thought her students had sent letters for all of Judy's students; however, given the uneven enrollment in these paired classes, it proved almost impossible to ensure that every student was covered. Since 18 of Kate's students wrote, with seven of them writing two letters to different students in Judy's class, only 25 letters arrived from England. Given that there are 37 students in Judy's class, a number do not receive letters.[10] Of the focal students, Elizabeth is left out for this exchange. It seems that her partner, Farah, moved back to Bangladesh in October although she later returns. Elizabeth relates her fears that since she has no partner, no one in England will read her writing:

> I wanted to have a person that I was trying to exchange my work with, because I mean, I mean I like to think that it's going to get read by someone—that, you know, and I'm going to be reading their work and stuff, and instead of it just getting sent there and thrown away. You know, I'm sure they wouldn't throw it away, but— (Interview, March 24, 1988)

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[10] Since we have no record of the letter from Susanna to Belle, it is not included in the counts of these response letters from the U.K. in Figure 3.3. It likely was sent separately, perhaps to Belle's home.

Like the name papers, the response papers that do arrive are decorated with borders, highlighted words, and drawings.

British Response as Evaluation. As first response letters, most are under a page and include little direct evaluation of the name papers from the United States. The evaluation that surfaces is general and positive. For example, Mark writes to Iggy, "I read your name paper it was good"; he then goes immediately on to write a personal letter that ignores Iggy's writing. In a more complicated piece, Kenneth combines evaluation with an extension of the experience Torch writes about:

> To Torch I think your work was very good. The beast part of your work is when you said your nick name was named Dungeons and Dragons Because I watch Dungeons and Dragons on T.V. Well done.

British Response as Extending Experience. As Kenneth shows, another function of the response from Kate's class occurs when students take the opportunity to extend experiences relayed in the original writing. Kenneth continues his response to Torch in this same vein:

> In England Dungeons and Dragons cames on every week Its the beast cartoon Ive seen and I am happy you made it part of your work I think your work is the most interesting Iv read out of this work I would like to read more writeing from you.

British Response as Personal Communication. Perhaps the most common form for response from English is the giving of and asking for personal information. Mark's letter to Iggy consists mostly of a series of personal questions that demand only brief answers:

> Do you have any Brothers or sisters?
> And how old are you?
> What Football team do you suport?
> Do you like reading comics and if so which comic do you read?
> What sport do you like?
> What tv programmes do you watch?

British Response as Correction. In an interview late in the year, Belle discusses a kind of corrective response she received in a letter that must have come from Susanna. Unfortunately, Susanna's letter is not on file but Belle's memory of it shows her negative reaction to correction:

> One letter I got from Susanna, it was kind of offensive. Cause I had my name paper. She goes, "We're not allowed to use Tipex in our school more than once on a paper." I was like, okay, fine. (Interview, June 13, 1989)

Response from the United States: Judy's Students Enter the Dialogue. In December, Judy's students write back to the students in Kate's class who had sent them letters. Since Elizabeth did not receive a letter, she does not write back. When Torch and Iggy write to their British partners, their letters, like most of those that came from England, are under a page. Belle, with unusual enthusiasm, fills a second page (only one other student in Judy's class writes more than one page). These letters from Judy's students, influenced by the British letters and name papers, are accompanied by modest drawings and sketches. In their beginning dialogue, Judy's students respond both to the name papers they received from England and to the response letters to their own name papers.

U.S. Response as Evaluation. Much like the British students, Judy's students avoid evaluating the writing that has arrived and what evaluation there is is positive. Iggy responds to Mark's writing only in a P.S.:

> I Liked your Name Paper, it was so very neat and very Informative.

In her long letter to Susanna, Belle includes only a few lines of evaluation as a kind of coda:

> Your name paper was really well written. I love the name Roseann too. Well thats all now and rember to write back! Thanks!

U.S. Response as Personal Communication. The centerpiece of Belle's letter to Susanna functions as personal communication about her interests:

> When I grow up I would love to go to England. I watch Days of our Lives, Santa Barbra, You cant do that on televiosion. (It's a show), Facts of Life, Growing Pains, Who's the Boss, Head of the class, Perfect Strangers, Cosby Show, A different world, Thorb, Out of this world, Silver spoons, Punky Breswter, Alf and Our House.

After listing her favorite movies, Belle asks about Susanna's interests: "How old are you and when is your Birthday? Could you also tell me a little bit about England?" She then tells when her birthday is, asks about pets, explains about her bird, asks for a picture, and gives her home address. She also ends her letter with four personal P.S.'s:

> P.S. Feel free to Ask any questions even if there dumb!
>
> P.P.S. Do you keep a diary.
>
> P.P.P.S. What grade are you in.
>
> P.P.P.P S. Bye now!!!!!

Interestingly, Belle receives a personal response from Susanna in a sealed envelope, addressed to Belle, but included with a later set of British writing. In her reply, Susanna tells Belle:

> I live in tottenham and the are[a] is rather bad 1988 there was a riot, and the weather is very horrid England is not a place for a holliday

After describing her pets, she closes with three P.S.'s of her own that parallel Belle's:

> .P.S. We don't have grades in our schools in england we have years 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th and the 6th form I am in the second.
>
> .P.P.S I Don't keep a diary why do you ask
>
> .P.P.P.S Bye

Like Mark in England, Torch too uses his letter to Kenneth to establish personal communication about a topic unrelated to the original writing in the name paper. Torch asks Kenneth about sports in England and reveals:

> I am on a basketball team now. I just finished being on a soccer team for soccer season. We lost every soccer game except one that we won by forfeit.

Judy's students also answer personal questions that the U.K. students asked. Iggy replies to Mark's questions with the apparently expected one-line answers. He ends with one request, "Please draw me some pictures."

U.S. Response as Reiteration. Since Judy's students are already in the midst of a dialogue, they can respond in ways that take into account the response they have received. When they perceive misunderstandings on the part of the British students, they reiterate information that they had already written in their name paper, just to be sure they are getting their point across. For example, Torch begins:

> Dear Kenneth,
>
> I was glad you liked my paper. My nickname is "Torch". I wasn't sure if you understood that or not. I got the name from the game of Dungeons and Dragons. We used to have the show Dungeons and Dragons on tv here but not any more.

U.S. Response as Clarification. In another kind of response that depends on the ongoing dialogue, Belle clarifies something about her nickname that Susanna had apparently questioned:

> Dear Susanna,
>
> I guess my mother calls me space kadet because they begin with my initals. I'm really not some weirdo kid who goes around staring into space all the time.

Conclusions. The name papers provide an effective opening for the year. The students take the opportunity to open up a social relationship, especially as they begin a social dialogue with their "response" letters. At this point in the year, their response letters are brief and serve multiple functions, with direct response to the writing from abroad relatively sparse and with only Kate's students finding a common experience in the writing from the United States and then extending that experience. The evaluations from both countries are all positive; one "correction" does come from Kate's class, but it is not well received. With the exception of Elizabeth who has no partner, the focal students are developing a connection to and are beginning to get to know their British audience. They are starting to reflect critically on a distant culture and in turn on their own lives. Even Elizabeth, although afraid that her own writing will have no audience in Kate's class, is reading the writing that comes from England and learning about the British students.

U.S. Spooky Tales

With no counterpart from England, the spooky tales are part of a contest that Judy holds each October, to coincide with Halloween. For the contest, the students write spooky stories which Judy, another teacher, and the students themselves judge.[11] Although the spooky tales are written for the contest, Belle captures the sentiments of the class when she writes in her journal:

> I think it would be a good idea for us to send our spooky tales to England. I think they would really enjoy them.

---

[11] In 1986-87, since these stories were not written especially for the exchange, Judy planned to send only the winners; however, her decision provoked some controversy since the research team feared that sending the work of only a few students could lead to differential access to the educational potential of the exchange. After discussing our concerns with Judy, she decided to send all the students' stories. For the 1987-88 exchange year Judy planned from the outset that if she was to send spooky tales, she would send them all.

Significantly longer than the name papers, the spooky tales are filled with vivid and gory details, the boys' tales tending often to sound like take-offs on Stephen King novels or scripts from "Nightmare on Elm Street" and the girls' sounding more like Nancy Drew mysteries or classical ghost stories. A number end with the "it was just a dream" formula. Most are well-developed stories of several pages and are extremely sophisticated and highly imaginative productions for sixth-grade students. Each is different in both topic and style and has the clear voice of its author.

Several of Judy's students, including Torch and Elizabeth, are so anxious to win an award that they write more than one story. Torch explains, "I wanted to win. Better chance of winning that way" (Interview, June 13, 1989). In his journal Torch reiterates his intent and displays his enthusiasm:

> I like this assiagnment I think its fun. I'm entering more than once. In fith grade I was a bloodohalic. I loved blood, horror films, demons, devils, scary stoiries and anything that would scare me or make me sick. One of my stories is about a nurse killer. Another one is about a mendocino hand. There both pretty violent. (Journal, December 11, 1987)

As Table 3.2 shows, one of Torch's spooky tales is longer than Elizabeth's.

Elizabeth shows her enthusiasm in her journal:

> I hope to win a prize for my spooky tales and I am going to enter more than one paper. It should be very fun to do these papers and hear what papers were good. So far I think my first spooky story is prety good.

Elizabeth and Torch are both rewarded for their efforts, Elizabeth with second place and Torch with fourth. Iggy, who only writes one piece, comes in third.

The Writing. Elizabeth's award is for "The Tiger Princess," which opens with a family visit to the narrator's grandfather's grave:

> It was Sunday. My family and I were going to visit my dead grandfathers at the graveyard. Every year since he died we had gone to visit him and each year it got more boring.

The narrator forgets her jacket, and when she returns for it, her routine visit takes an interesting turn:

> As I entered the graveyard I looked around for my jacket but I did not see it anywhere. I walked over to my grandpa's grave for that was where I thought it was. Suddenly I was enveloped in a tunnel of darkness with but one light shinning in some far away corner.

At this point the light turns into the ghost of her dead grandfather who promises to protect her. He disappears, and she sees her jacket. But as she tries to leave with her jacket, she finds the cemetary gates locked. While trying to climb over the fence, she falls into an open grave where she finds herself "staring at a group of people who were not people but peoples ghosts." Among them she sees a white tiger, which approaches her:

> The tigers eyes gleamed as if full of mischief. The tiger was closer to me than ever and I was trembling. The tiger then opened her huge jaws and bit down on the back of my shirt. Only then did I realize the tiger had wings of a golden blue color clamped onto her back and a crown of emralds in her hair.

The tiger flys with the narrator who "grew used to it" and "felt beautiful and free." Elizabeth concludes with a trick ending:

> Then all of a sudden the tiger dropped me and as I fell I reached out for the tiger but felt nothing but air. I landed on something soft and I soon fell into a restless sleep. The next thing I knew I had awoken in my own bed safe at home. It must have been a dream I thought. So I stood and gazed out my window for a few minutes untill I saw the same tiger flying up into the sky. I turned away quickly but, alas, no matter how I tried to believe that what had happend at the graveyard last night was a dream I knew it was not.

Torch's award-winning story, "Nurse Stalker," is the shorter of his two pieces and consists of one long paragraph about a serial murderer. He begins:

> One night a nurse was coming home from work listening to the radio. Suddenly flash! " A mad man is going around town killing nurses visciously!" The nurse suddenly heard footsteps behind her. She was terrified. She walked faster and the footsteps kept up with her pace. The nurse started to run and the foot steps ran with her. Suddenly klunk! Something hit her. She fell to the ground in pain. She looked next to her and there was a bloody head dripping brains. She yelled at the top of her lungs in horror. The man quickly took a sword and stuck it through her back. She died instantly. There was stream of blood that leaked into the gutter.

After relating several other incidents, Torch concludes:

> That same day a new nurse signed up. She told everyone that she was skilled in martial arts and could protect everyone. That night the nursing home's heat broke. It was 32 degrees outside. One of the men at the nursing home was very cold so he decided to get some kindling at the corner store to light a fire. When the man came back, as he was walking up the porch stairs, he noticed a stream of blood leaking underneath the door. The man opened the door and there was a line up of bloody nurses. All except one, the new nurse. The new nurse said "Don't worry, I'll protect you". Then she quickly ripped off her wig and pulled out a knife.

When Torch explains that he won fourth prize, he speculates, "It mighta won higher, if I wrote more stuff" (April 5, 1988). He also reports that he thinks his spooky tale was his best writing. When asked about his writing process, he responds:

> The "Nurse Stalker", that I got from my friend. He helped me with that because he like, he has ideas about that stuff. So he helped me with that one. (April 5, 1988)

Iggy, a self-proclaimed lover of blood and guts like Torch, writes his third-place piece about his adventures in a haunted house. He begins:

> Here it is. The house that has been feared for all these years. I am going to tell you a story about the night when I stayed at that house.
>
> It all started back when I was a kid. I had just started a club. I asked all of my friends to join, and naturally they joined. One night we were sitting in our tree house when my friend Buffy said, "Hey guys, do you know what?" We all sighed and said, "What?" You know that boy named Teddy? We all shrugged and said, "Yeah." Well, he went into that house and everybody says he hasn't come out yet. Wide eyed, we all listened to the rest of his story. When he was finished, I boastfully replied that I would go in there anytime. All my friends said, "Yeah, right." I said, "O.K., let's make a bet". Before you knew it, I had made a bet no sane person would make. I agreed to stay in the house for an entire night.

After describing the frightening atmosphere inside the house, Iggy relates the climactic incident:

> A rat darted in front of me. It looked at me with beady eyes. Right then it seemed to grow. I froze. Before I knew it, the rat was not a rat anymore. It was the missing boy, Teddy. Rats were engulfing him. And while he was being engulfed by rats, I was being engulfed in fear. I was being approached by thousands of rats. In an instant, the eyes were peering at me from my feet. Stomping didn't stop them. I was being eaten alive.

Then he concludes:

> When I woke up I was on the ground under my tree house. My freinds were standing over me. I said, "What happened?" They said, "You fell out of the tree house." "But what about the house, the rats and Teddy?" They frowned and brought me home. I guess it was all a dream. So that's my story.

Like Torch, Iggy thinks the spooky tale shows him writing at his best: "My spooky tales thing, that was my favorite one I did all year" (Interview, April 5, 1988).

Belle writes about a city bus driver who poses as a doctor and who kills his passengers ritualistically with a dagger. Although she does not win a prize, Belle feels as positively about this writing as the other students. She writes in her journal:

> I really like writing the Spooky tales. I really like Freedy's [another student in her class] paper. It is great, faboulas, exellant, Mrs. Logan really how to give out assingments. This assingment is my favoreriote.

When Judy sends her students' spooky tales, she writes in a letter to Kate that the winners "won Halloween treats & stickers." Still continuing their exchange into the 1988-89 year, Judy reports that now she is attempting to reduce the competitiveness of this assignment. All students who do their best and complete their story in a timely manner have it included in a bound anthology. The prizes and awards are gone, with the reward for good work being inclusion in the anthology for Kate's class in England. In spite of the obvious motivation provided by the competition, Judy reports that the assignment works even better now that the competitive overtones are deemphasized.

Response from Great Britain. Kate's class responds to the spooky tales in the same letters in which they respond to the autobiographies. Although the other focal students receive letters, Elizabeth is the only focal students who receives a direct response to her spooky tale. These letters will be discussed in the next section on the autobiographies.

British Response as Evaluation. Farah writes to Elizabeth, explaining that she now has two U.S. students to whom she is writing. She continues:

> Your 'Spooky Tales' were great fun. I really did enjoy them. The 'Tiger Princess' was especially fun, for you always let the main characters be animals. The Tiger Princess whom people might have thought ferocious turned out to be not quite so ferocious. And in 'The Ghost of Misty Lane' a deadly cobra was the killer.

Unlike the general evaluation of the name papers, Farah's evaluation is elaborated, giving reasons why she likes Elizabeth's writing. In an interview, Elizabeth, who had been left out in the first round of response, indicates the importance of Farah's letter to her: "She [Farah] liked my spooky tales, see? She wrote that. I liked the part about, that she wrote to me" (Interview, March 24, 1988).

Conclusions. Although this imaginative fiction lacked a counterpart in England, the students in Judy's class enjoyed this writing. It had not one but two audiences beyond the classroom, with the possibility of winning prizes motivating some students to write more than they were assigned.

Autobiographies

Judy's class spends about a month on their autobiographies. As Table 3.2 shows, these autobiographies, once compiled, comprise the most extended writing Judy's students do. The autobiography is also the one assignment that Judy adds to her curriculum especially for the exchange, beginning it in the 1986-87 exchange year and continuing it through her 1987-88 exchange year and into the 1988-89 year. As for the first exchange of name papers, both Kate and Judy are diligent in seeing that their students respond to each others' writing.

Because the autobiographies were a major topic of conversation in the focal student interviews, for this exchange we will include supplementary information about how the students wrote the autobiographies and detailed information about how they responded to the writing from England.

The Writing: Processes and Products. As Figure 3.3 shows, in Judy's class the students work on their autobiographies from mid-November to mid-December. Kate's students work significantly longer, beginning earlier in November and not completing theirs until early January. Thus, there is a gap between when Judy's students mail their autobiographies and when they receive the autobiographies from England, and indeed by the time they do receive this second mailing from England they have sent two additional pieces, the spooky tales described in the previous section and the women in history papers to be described next. Both Judy's and Kate's students illustrate these pieces and also include pictures of themselves and their families.

Students in Judy's class write on a number of topics which form sections of their autobiographies. Students complete this, their longest piece, section by section, with most sections following topics that Judy helps her students generate during class discussion. Table 3.3 shows the topics of the focal students' sections; each student writes seven to fourteen different sections, with each section about a page or slightly less, with many little more than a paragraph. With this careful structuring of the task, Judy supports these very young students in a way that allows them to produce very extended pieces and to reflect on their pasts and futures in ways that are often extraordinary for sixth graders. Judy's students have different perceptions about how the topics for the sections of their autobiographies are generated, with some such as Belle thinking she created the topics all by herself, to Elizabeth who says that she collaborated fully with Judy to determine them, to Torch who claims he writes on teacher assigned topics but could have changed them had he wished, to Iggy who feels that he must write on a set of topics assigned by Judy. Belle who explains, "I just put the stuff in that I thought was important to me" [underlining mine] (Interview, March 24, 1988), writes on more unique topics than any of the other focal students (see Table 3.2). Elizabeth reports:

> The first thing we did was write some ideas that we thought would be good ideas to write about . . . Then we made a long, list of . . . interesting topics to write about . . . She just like assigned us a paper to do on, like she'd just say, well okay tonight, why don't we write about my hobbies and special interests. [underlining mine] (Interview, March 24, 1988)

Table 3.3
AUTOBIOGRAPHY TOPIC CHOICE and FOCAL STUDENT SELECTION

TOPICS	BELLE	IGGY	ELIZABETH	TORCH
About Me		X		X
"Event of the Year"	X			
Favorite Teacher			X	X
Favorite Person		X		X
Favorite Place		X		X
Greatest Party		X		
Halloween		X	X	X
Hobbies and Interests	X		X	X
I Have Learned		X		X
I Remember When I Was Most Happy	X	X	X	X
I Remember When I Was Angry or Mad.	X	X		
I Used to Be. . . But Now I am		X	X	X
Important People			X	
My First Five Years	X		X	X
My House			X	
Pets		X	X	X
Sunday				X
Thanksgiving	X	X		
Trips		X		X
Typical Day		X		
When I'm 25	X	X	X	X

By contrast, Torch remarks: "She gave us a list, a suggestion on what things we should send to them, and I did most of the list" [underlining mine] (Interview, April 5, 1988). Torch seems to feel some freedom since he implies that he could have chosen to deviate from the list. Finally, Iggy explains how he got his ideas: "Well she gave us the assignments" [underlining mine]. He describes his autobiography: "It's all these uh other assignments that I did a long time ago, that I put together." When the interviewer asks what he means, he shows his lack of ownership of this writing:

> Well it's like . . . she wanted us to do all these assignments, but she'll tell us some. And then we'll do them that night, and then she'll just say keep them, or she'll put them in her folder. And then pretty soon when we got our paper of what was supposed to be in our autobiography, with lots of stuff that we'd already written. [underlining mine] (April 5, 1988)

The students' differing perceptions of their roles in generating the topics relate to their sense of ownership of this writing.

Although fully engaged and feeling complete ownership, Belle has difficulty writing her autobiography, even with help from her mother. Of the focal students, Belle covers the least number of topics in the fewest words. She explains her process in which she completes one section at a time, beginning with pictures, then doing the cover, and finally the writing. She says she is satisfied with her outcome:

> I mean I never wrote like, like I've written. Last year I wrote like forty pages reports, but I mean for autobiography it was . . . pretty hard. It was pretty good though. I mean it wasn't my, I don't think it was my best writing. I think I could've done better, but I mean you only had so much time. Like if I had a year to do it, it'd probably be really good. (Interview, March 24, 1988)

Although Belle seems satisfied, her writing does not convey what she articulates orally. For example, she tells the interviewer about David, a childhood friend who is always in her mind as she writes her autobiography:

> I was thinking of the whole time, because he was a real important influence on me. . . . I was thinking about well I have to include him in this." (Interview, March 24, 1988)

Explaining his pictures that she included in her autobiography, she continues:

> I have his picture right here too. That's him. Okay, this is him. Let's see, this is me in first grade. You can see that. And let's see, that's him in like kindergarten, and now he has a new brother. And this is . . . him now, so he looks . . . pretty same. Well he has a flat top now. You know, this was just a little while ago. Yeah and then like . . . it was hard for me at first, because he had a new brother, Toby. This is his new little brother who's like—that's how old he is now. Yeah and then he has . . . an older sister, who was adopted. She's like an older sister to me totally. We always like get together and gossip about our friends and stuff. But yeah he can play an Nintendo really good. He's smart. Yeah . . . he was really in mind most of the time. (Interview, March 24, 1988)

In her actual autobiography, she mentions David only in her section entitled "My First 5 years" when she writes the following:

> I spent most my early childhood with a boy named David Wong. You see, my mother knew his father from College and when my mom met Davids mother Jane, it turned out that she was prengnat too and her baby was due the same day I was. . . . We practically lived

> together. My mom would always bring me over to their house and Jane, David, my mother and I would go on picnics, play at the park, go to musems and so forth.

Orally, Belle shows a keen awareness of her rhetorical decisions. For example, in one section of her autobiography she describes her mom's horrified reactions when Belle cut her own hair: "Her shoes flew off her feet and her hair stuck straight up." She explains her choice of images:

> It's like exaggeration sort of. It's like a way you write. It's like um I mean it wouldn't be funny if you said "My mom came in." Okay it'd be funny if you said my mommy came in, and, and her shoes fell right off her, fell right out of her feet, because they're going to laugh at that, because they know that, I mean that's not true. But if you said something like, "My mom came in, and she goes, Belle why what did you do?" Right, it's like . . . that's not very funny. So you have to make it funny a little bit, I mean for it to be good. But yeah, . . . that's how I did it. And like I think that's important, and I mean even like even if you're supposed to be doing a serious, a serious paper, it should be at least like, unless it's like a report or something, it should have at least one humorous thing. Like Iggy writes, he writes really funny. I've known him since first grade. (Interview, March 24, 1988)

Belle also explains that for the exchange she feels obligated to write honestly, to tell the truth, to inform her audience about the United States:

> I wanted . . . to show this person . . . the person I am. You know like I'm not going to lie about anything. . . . Whatever she read, . . . it wouldn't be a lie; it would be the truth . . . She [U.K. student Susanna] would read this. . . . She'd go, "Oh wow, I didn't know they had stuff like that in America." (Interview, March 24, 1988)

Belle also has another concern about writing for the exchange; she perceives herself as an ambassador for her country and wants to project a positive image:

> I wanted to make a good impression on American people. I didn't . . . want her [British student Susanna] to think like we're really stuck-up, or that all we do all the time is sit and talk about people or stuff. That's not true. I mean we do that some of time, but not not all of the time. (Interview, March 24, 1988)

Belle's goal is to be honest while she puts her best self forward.

Unlike Belle, Elizabeth puts her ideas into writing with ease. Elizabeth produces one of the most well-developed and insightful autobiographies in the class. Balancing the fact that she still has no response partner is not only Elizabeth's ability to translate her thoughts into written language but also her sense of ownership of this writing.

A particularly striking section of Elizabeth's autobiography is entitled "Important People." It is her longest section at five densely written pages and includes lengthy paragraphs about her mother, father, brother, and sister; about her friends in her class, Athene, Bannana, Dana, and Jackie; and about another friend Margo who is a grade older.

Elizabeth's paragraph on her brother captures the flavor of her writing in this section:

> My brother is also an important person in my life. He is only four and he is going through some difficult stages, but no matter how many times he calls me a dodo head I know he still loves me. My brother has a really great imagination. One time he said to my mom "Lets pretend we're a family of popsicles and we all have flat heads." I thought that

> was really funny. He also loves to play games of pretend and put on plays. Another really great thing about him is how sweet he is to my little sister. You would usually think a four year old kid would be jealous when his mom had another child, but not my brother. He loves to sing songs and dance for my sister to entertain her. That is a big asset to my family because it keeps her from crying and the rest of the family can attend to our other needs. Even though my brother's mean sometimes basiclly hes a very loveable guy.

Elizabeth explains how easily she writes about these important people. Although she normally generates ideas on her topic by mapping her thoughts on paper and talking with her friends, these procedures become unnecessary when she writes this section:

> When I did the important people in my life, I didn't do on that map. . . . That was one of my favorite ones to write. I just kind of wrote about everything . . . And it was . . . easy for me to just write about them. (Interview, March 24, 1988)

Her strong sense of purpose and commitment stimulate her enjoyment:

> I really liked writing that one because . . . you could tell everybody how important these people are to you, in your life, and why they're important. And . . . I even, learned from it why they were more important to me. (Interview, March 24, 1988)

While writing her autobiography, Elizabeth gets help from her family. Her mom creates the cover and even her four-year-old brother serves as an audience: "I would read them to him, and he'd say, oh I like the part about the- you know and stuff, and he'd tell me what he liked" (Interview, March 24, 1988).

Like Elizabeth and Belle, Torch enjoys writing his autobiography, but unlike them, he does not do his best job. He admits that he ran out of time. Still his section about influential people is especially engaging. In it, Torch focuses on just one person, his best friend Fubbs, someone who is featured in several sections of Torch's autobiography (Fubbs's house is Torch's favorite place; when Torch grows up he plans to go into business with Fubbs):

> One of the most important people in my life is my best friend, Fubbs. If you think that's his real name, it's not. It's just a nick name. But he prefers it. We do everything together. We share everything together. We go everywhere together. We do almost everything together. When I go over to his house we play nintendo or D and D. We go in the back yard and chop wood or go on the roof and look at all the houses. Another friend of mine is Shannon. He comes over to Fubbs' house too. The three of us do alot of things. Shannon's mom runs a child care program called the Grattan After School Program - GASP. Shannon, Fubbs and I sometimes go on field trips with GASP. We go to the park or swimming or something. Once when we were at Fubbs' house spending the night, at midnight we all went into a pitch black room and said bloody mary 6 times. Supposedly the devil would appear and give you three scratches on the cheek. But nothing happened and we found out later that the bloody mary story wasn't true. Since Fubbs and I do so many things together, he's my favorite person. I would have written this about my Mom but I bet most of the class is writing about their parents.

Also charming is Torch's section on what he has learned in life:

> What I've learned in life is how to be polite. I found that if you treat people with respect, you get respect back. For example, when you're having dinner with a friend's parents, you say lots of pleases and thank yous. And when you're done with the meal, you say "may I please be excused". And when you bump into someone or knock

> something over, you apologize and say you're sorry. Before I was nice to adults, they wouldn't give me anything unless I said please. And now when I'm polite, I get respect.

Torch's problem with time comes about because he is absent on some of the days the class works on the autobiographies. Torch ends up putting his autobiography together the weekend before the set is mailed to England. Torch explains: "I had to type up all my letters, really quick and just, not a lot of time for fun. . . . My mom helped me too" (Interview, April 5, 1988). He admits, "I need to do a good story in a certain amount of time, so I could finish enough to make a book" (Interview, April 5, 1988). Just as Torch knows that he could have improved his spooky tale by including more detail, he says that if he were writing his autobiography again he "probably would have done it longer, try and combine lots of the stuff into one sentence" (Interview, June 13, 1988).

Iggy, the only focal student who was not enthusiastic about writing an autobiography, remarks candidly, "The autobiography, that wasn't very fun" (Interview, April 5, 1988). Coinciding with his lack of motivation, Iggy produces the least developed (although not the shortest) writing. For example, in his favorite person section, like Elizabeth he writes about several favorite people but unlike her he gives relatively little detail:

> My favorite person in the world is my mother. She's my favorite person because she takes care of me, my whole life. She is the most loving, nice, beautiful, and understanding mother in the world. My second favorite person in the world is someone I think some of my friends know about. I could go on with this person, but I'll just give you a clue who she is. She has reddish, maroon hair. My third favorite person in the world is, well, I don't know.

Iggy describes his writing process as a series of linear steps:

> I just wrote all these things, and then I had like three essays to make up, so I wrote those. And then I put them in the order, and then I made the cover . . . and I gave it to mom and she typed it up for me. So, and I handed it in.

His mother's involvement is unusual. Iggy explains, "My mom usually doesn't help me with my homework at all." Iggy admits that he spent "half an hour each" on the sections. He also admits, "I don't make it a habit to do two drafts on my homework assignments." Iggy doubts that any of his classmates read his autobiography because "it's too long"; and he says that he read none of the other students' in his own class, although he read at least three from England. Of the British autobiographies, Iggy chose to read Kuldeep's because he was attracted by his artwork. When asked what he thought the British class would think of his writing, he responds, "I know that Mark would like my letters and they probably liked my spooky tales but not my like autobiography cause it's just serious."

After Judy's students send their autobiographies, they await the batch from England with excitement. In her December 14 journal entry, Belle exclaims: "I am really anxience to see Susanna's Autobiography. I hope she has a lot of pictures in it." When the autobiographies arrive from England, about two months after Judy's students sent theirs, her class is enthusiastic.

The British writing, although long in coming, obviously is done with care. Each autobiography arrives, encased in a heavy white paper cover which is decorated with drawings in colored markers and is stapled along the left margins to create a book. Helen Stanford's autobiography is among the longest in her class. It is an elaborate work, consisting of 16 pages of meticulously written text and drawings, as well as four additional pages of photographs and a cover page which sports Helen's own photograph. The entire presentation is neat and pleasing, in all respects. Helen includes both section headings and sometimes subsections. Her autobiography includes the following eight sections:

> "About me & my surroundings," which also includes subsections "My character," "My background," "My features"—replete with sketched self-portrait, "My hobbies," "Where I live,"—with a drawing of her room and a floor plan of her house;
>
> "My Schools";
>
> "Friends & Family" with subheadings for friends and family;
>
> "Likes" which include subheadings for television, music, books, animals, and food;
>
> "DISLIKES" written on a computer and containing subheadings for food, music, people, my town, and political parties;
>
> "My school journey to France," a five-page section of daily journal entries including a long entry telling how a classmate accidentally hit her in the head with a rock and how she suffered a concussion and was taken to the hospital, making the entire group miss their boat back;
>
> "My Pets," a section divided between text and drawings of her goldfish, kittens, gerbils, and tortoise; and
>
> "My Future"

Helen begins by admitting "I am very shy when I first meet somebody or someone I don't know well. I am quiet on most days at school but I joke a lot after school." Living with her parents and her sister, she loves animals and reports, "I am a vegetarian because I like animals too much to eat dead ones." Her personality shows as she recounts her dislikes: "I dislike places which are too tidy and nevery look homely, but I don't like things to get out of hand," and "I don't like people who are: spoilt, mean, selfish, noisy, nosey, showoffs or lazy." Under "My Town," she dislikes:

> a) The pavement being covered in dogs mess.
> b) Rubbish that has been thrown carelessly somewhere.
> c) People who take up the whole pavement to themselves.
> d) Cars that don't stop at red lights.
> e) people who push into queues.

She concludes this section: "I dislike the conservative party because they want nuclear weapons." About her future she writes that she hope to "pass exams in science, maths, french and English" so that she can "go to college or university and study; to be a vet." She wants "to live in a small village or on the outskirts of a town where the countryside is not ruined" and where she "will have lots of pets." She expects "to get married to a nice kind man when I am about 22 and have 2 children."

Another example of the British writing comes from Susanna Blake. Her table of contents includes the following topics:

1. My private file
2. Likes and Dislikes

3. My character

4. My Hobbies

5. My Beginnings
{6. My Background
{7.

8. My Earliest Memories
9. Important people

10. Speacial events

11. Sports

12. Holiday pictues

13. My future

In one of her sections, she writes about an event that parallels Belle's haircut story. Susanna tells about her own hair and her mom's reaction to her brother's cutting it:

> My uncle called me black beauty because my hair was long and black, everybody liked my hair.
> . . . .
> My mum was out of the room one day and my brother and me was playing. My brother was jealous of my hair SO he cut my plaits off.
> My mum was to angry to say anything.

Susanna also concludes this section with descriptions of her family members which she prefaces, "Everyone in my family is different from me." But she concludes with her mom:

> Well that leaves mum she's quiet kind and never says no.
> A BIT LIKE ME.
> by
> Susanna Blake
> 2SW

Accompanying this section is the picture of Susanna and her mum in Antigua which bears the title:

> me + mum
> up a tree in Antigua

In her "Important People" section she reveals that her uncle "was once a world Champion Boxer he was/is very rich he has a large house and a Swimming pool in the garden." She continues, "But most of all my family is very important mum and brother and sister my mum is very important Some times unfare between the four of us but I don't mind."

Susanna's Sports section includes three headings: "football," "Atheletics," and "pe at School." Under the first two she writes a few sentences, and under the last she lists eight physical education activities available at her school, from football (soccer) and tennis to keep fit and dance. About football or soccer, she writes, "I like to play football but not watch it I am in the football team at school we play aginst the other classes and we wone all of them." About athletics, she says, "I like Atheletics well better still I like running Veronica Hope is the fastest girl in my class."

In Susanna's final section, she muses about her future:

> When I am older I would like to be a model or a designer or a photographer.
> If I was a model I would be self employed and desin my own clothes and take pictures and make a fashion magazine.

She then says she would live in "a three bedroom house" with her "lovely big dog" and "little sister." She concludes:

> I dont want to be married.
> I would like an estate of flats and Rent them too people. I would like a blue escort and a swiss bankacount.

Reception of the British Writing: Focusing on Common Ground. Instead of focusing on differences, Judy's students are beginning to focus their attention on what they have in common with the British students who are fast being perceived as "friends." Elizabeth says that after reading the British autobiographies the students in her class felt like they knew the British writers well:

> You felt like you knew this person for years after you read them, you know. It's like you could write them a letter and actually think . . . you're writing to an old friend and stuff, even though it was the first time you've written to them or something, because you just knew a lot about them. (Interview, March 24, 1988)

Elizabeth, who has not yet received the letter from Farah described earlier and who still thinks she is without a partner, begins to take control of the situation when this second batch of British writing arrives. She says that she "read a lot of people's autobiographies" both from England and from her own class. She talks specifically about Helen Sanford's:

> I wrote to Helen Sanford, and, see, I read her autobiography, and she was Athene's person, that Athene was writing to. And I just decided that since Athene used to sit across from me that I'd just do the same person as her, and so I wrote to her, and I read her autobiography. (Interview, March 24, 1988)

Belle also especially likes Helen Sanford's autobiography: "I really liked Helen Sanford's. I really like her biography. I read most of the peoples', but hers was really good" (Interview, June 13, 1988).

Like Elizabeth, Belle comments on the similarities between students in the two countries:

> They're very active in sports and stuff. Like a lot of people, I mean they are active over here, but not as much as they are. Um let's see. You know they're pretty, they're like us. I mean I didn't think they had skateboards over there. I didn't think they had, I knew they had snow, but I mean their mailboxes really surprised me. They look like—they look like trash cans or something. (Interview, March 24, 1988)

Belle also remarks about how much her partner, Susanna, mentions her mother in her writing and how that in turn created a new interaction between herself and her mother:

> In the autobiographies and stuff um the girl Susanna Blake that I did, she was like she really loves her mom a lot, and every page she's at least, you know, "Here's me and my mum in the tree." And how they use mum. I mean I never. And now like it's a big joke. I call my mom mumsers Sullivan.

Interestingly, Susanna mentions her "mum" in only three of her thirteen sections.

Response from Great Britain: Shaping the Response Dialogue. Kate wants to push toward a fuller, more thoughtful response to the writing than her students had managed when they responded to the name papers from Judy's group, and so this time Kate prepares a handout to encourage and help her students structure their response dialogues (Appendix 4). This handout is passed around to all the teachers in the study on both sides of the Atlantic and becomes a basic think-piece for all the exchange teachers as they grapple with the issue of how their students can best respond to the writing from abroad. In the handout, Kate opens by setting a positive and serious tone for response:

> Students from America have obviously spent a long time writing interesting work specifically for you to read. It would be nice for them to receive a letter from you where you show that not only have you read their work but you have thought about it too.

She concludes:

> . . . take your time responding to their work. They have worked hard—it would be nice for them to have some thoughtful and positive responses!

Kate also suggests topics that readers might consider what the writer makes them "think about," "talk about," be "curious about," and when they "want to write about something similar."

Since Kate's students had not yet responded to U.S. letters about their name papers and since spooky tales had arrived, Kate encourages response to these pieces as well as the autobiographies. On her handout she asks specific questions keyed to each piece. For the autobiographies, she asks:

> —Which parts were you most interested in?
> —Any questions? Anything you want to know more about.
> —Choose maybe 3 or 4 parts and talk about: any similar experiences . . . What these made you think about from your life.
> —Did their Autobiographies raise anything that you had not written about that you could write now. Eg. How do you see your life in 25 years' time.

The British responses show the influence of the handout both in their choices of topics and in the fact that these response letters are longer and contained more elaboration than their previous letters. However, since only 25 letters arrive (from 18 students, with seven of them writing two each), many of Judy's students still do not receive a response. Of the focal students, only Elizabeth and Torch receive responses, Elizabeth from Farah as noted earlier in the spooky tale section and Torch from Kenneth again.

British Response as Evaluation. Kenneth writes to Torch about his autobiography:

> I liked your autobiography about your life I think it was very good I like reading it. I think I read it about 10 times all the way through.

When we ask Torch in his interview at the end of the year, "Is there any writing that's come from any of the kids in England, that stands out in your mind, that you really remember?" he replies:

> Well, my partner, uh, he wrote to me, and he said that he liked my autobiography that I sent him. He said he really liked it, and he reads it over and over again. (Interview, June 13, 1988)

Similarly, Farah writes to Elizabeth about her impressions of her autobiography:

> I read your autobiography and I particularly liked the bit about the 'Red Dragons'. And the bit about the saying 'Lets all be a family of popsicles with flat heads. -by your brother. . . . I also liked the pictures of your family but how come your Dad—his name is Sammy Ehrman and not Sammy Braun.

In her March interview Elizabeth comments on how much Farah's positive words meant to her: "I liked that she told me the parts that she liked a lot" (Interview, March 24, 1988).

British Response as Extending Experience. When writing to Elizabeth, Farah also responds by extending the experience relayed in Elizabeth's writing:

> Does your family enjoy being a family of popsicles. I havent heard of a group like the 'Red Dragons! How did you start the group up.

Often the British responders add something on the theme of the writing from Judy's students. Most commonly they join in the speculation about "When I am Twenty-Five . . . " Farah concludes with the following:

> When I am 25 years old I will be either a Scientist, Chartered Accountant Lawyer or either a surgeon.
>
> Well I've got to go now.
>
> Yours American
> Projectly
>
> Farah Malik

Kenneth continues the dialogue with Torch about Dungeons and Dragons by writing, "I would like to know how to play Dungens and Dragons."

British Response as Clarification. Kenneth clarifies for Torch:

> I am sorry you did not get a autobiography from me it was
> Because all the work I done got lost But I will try to tell you a lot about me.

In an interview later in the year Torch recalls,

> Something happened to his autobiography, so he didn't send one to me, so in his letter, he was like apologizing that he didn't send one. (Interview, April 5, 1988)

British Response as Personal Communication. In his letter to Torch Kenneth essentially makes up for not sending an autobiography by including a great deal of autobiographical personal communication. He tells about where he lives and writes several sentences about his pet insects, spiders, worms, and lizards. He also tells that he has "3 sisters and one brother," explains that his favorite sports are "soccer, swimiming and Basketball," and that he is 13-years-old. On a second page Kenneth includes bigger than life-sized and detailed drawings of a beatle, fly, spider, and butterfly. In his earlier interview, when asked "What was particularly striking, or interesting, in his [Kenneth's] letter?" Torch replies:

> About the bugs, about how he told me that his pets like, I think he had the pet snake or something, and he told me how like it ate spiders and stuff, and he like, had like, like three spiders, three big spiders. (Interview, April 5, 1988)

Other students sustain ongoing dialogues about personal experiences by answering questions posed by Judy's students in their letters about the British name papers. For example, Stavros answers Coco's questions:

> in your response letter you gave me some questions
> Questions You asked me
>
> What kind of TV shos do we have in England?
> What kind of music do we have?
> Do I have any pets
> If I was a boy or girl
>
> Well Coco I am a boy and in England we have the same kind of music that you have in the USA. The pets that I have are a goldfish and a rabbit call bugsby
>
> here is that kind of TV show that we have on Saturday and Sunday

Then on the next page Stavros includes a copy of the published television guide for the weekend.

The British students also reveal information and initiate questions that could form the basis for future dialogue. Helen, after two pages of response to Athene's autobiography, draws maps of England and shows the places she has been. Then she asks Athene where in America she has been. She follows by saying that she lives in Tottenham which she describes as follows:

> In Tottenham I expect it is a bit like where you or some of your friends live. In Britain if you mentioned Tottenham the first thing people would think of would be riots. At a group of flats, Broadwater Farm, the residents and police had a riot. I don't know how it happened but in the end, one policeman was killed. We don't live that close to Broadwater Farm but a few of my friends live there and they say its alright. I like Tottenham very much.

In a P.S. Helen asks Athene, "Why not send you stories to a publisher?"

Response from the United States. Before receiving these letters from England, Judy's students had already written their own response letters to the British autobiographies (see Figure 3.3). Since Judy's students do not have the directions Kate gives about respose to writing, they write less about the British writing and more about personal matters. All the focal students except Torch write a letter.

Elizabeth, not knowing she will receive a letter from Farah, thinks she is still without a partner. She writes to Helen and explains:

> I was not assigned to you by my teacher but as a matter of fact I wasn't assigned to any one. So since one of my best friends (Athene) was doing you, I decided that I would also. I hope you don't mind haveing two people write to you.

About writing this response letter, Elizabeth remarks in her March interview:

> I wrote to Helen. . . . She was Athene's person, that Athene was writing to, and I just decided since Athene used to sit across from me, that I'd just do the same person as her. And so I wrote to her. (Interview, March 24, 1988)

U.S. Response as Evaluation. Commenting more on the writing than most of Judy's students, Elizabeth responds to Helen's autobiography:

> Your autobiagraphy was very intresting. From reading it I got a sense that you are a very creative person. I think that is great. I like to think of myself as a creative person although I am not half as creative as Athene.

Belle who writes two response letters, one to Helen and one to Susanna, writes to Helen:

> Dear Helen,
>
> Hi! My name is Belle Sullivan. I read your name paper when it first came and I really enjoyed it. Then when your Autobiography came I read it too. Your a lot like me.

This ends Belle's response to Helen's autobiography. Similarly, when Belle writes to Susanna, she begins her largely personal letter with a nod to Susanna's autobiography, "I loved your Autobigraphy! It was excellent."

U.S. Response as Personal Communication. Elizabeth devotes the rest of the letter to telling Helen about herself, apparently fearing that Helen has not read her autobiography. Elizabeth concludes:

> Well enough about me you must be getting bored especially if you've read my autobiagraphy. I like all the drawings you put in you're autobiagraphy you seem like a very artistic person. I hope you enjoyed this letter and learned something about me in the process. As I learned about you through your autobiagraphy. Hopefully you will write back to me in my home and in my school.

Iggy who read autobiograhies from Mark, Kuldeep, and Maria, writes again to Mark, but this time his letter is purely personal, answering the questions Mark posed in his previous letter but not mentioning Mark's writing at all. The opening sets the tone for this relatively brief letter:

> Dear Mark
>
> I do read comics, most of them are horror comics. My favorite movie is a Nightmare on Elm Street. I love Blood and gore. I am very good at making movie effects. I do Gymnastics as a sport. I play football on the weekends. One of my favorite things to do is play vidio games. I have a Nintendo. The nintendo is a vidio game system

The rest of the letter is devoted to a listing of the "vidio" games he owns. Then he concludes, "I dont have any brothers or Sissters. I think I'll be sending you a comic."

Belle concludes her letter to Helen with the following information:

> My partner for this wrighting expericene is April. I will be sending her a couple of magazines so if you wan't to see whats hot in America and whats not, check it out.

In her relatively brief letter Susanna, Belle discusses her favorite rock groups and television shows and her best friend.

U.S. Response as Extending Experience. At one point during this section, Elizabeth refers to something Helen has written about:

> I think you are very lucky to have gone to France even though you did hurt yourself very badly. I really want to go to France. Acually I would like to go alot of places all over the world.

Belle's comment to Helen that "your a lot like me" is a general form of extending experience.

Conclusions. A comparison of the U.S. and British response letters shows the dramatic effects of the structure Kate provides. At this point in the year Judy's students still write relatively short and largely personal letters, while Kate's students add lengthy and thoughtful responses to the writing they have received, mostly in the form of extending experiences from the writing. It is also important to note that these letters mark the end of the teacher-assigned response letters between these two classes. The rest of the correspondence between students is not official.

Women in History Papers

Judy's students write about famous women in history both for Kate's class in England and an annual essay contest sponsored by the San Francisco Chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW). Like the spooky tales, this exchange piece has a dual audience for Judy's group. Judy gives her students a full month to work on their women in history papers, and they choose to write about many types of women. Elizabeth selects Winnie Mandela; Torch chooses Rosa Parks; Iggy, Mother Teresa; and Belle, Louisa May Alcott. Judy makes it clear that in previous years her students have won top prizes and that she expects the same from this group. Elizabeth explains that Judy will select only the best papers from the class for entry into the NOW contest. In the end, Judy enters nine papers. As in previous years, her students do well. Elizabeth wins second place for sixth grade, and Athene, Elizabeth's good friend, wins first.

The British students do not begin their women in history papers until after the papers from Judy's class arrive in England. Kate gives this assignment for the first time, having seen Judy's group's women in history papers during the previous year of the exchange and having agreed that this year her class too would write women in history papers. Kate's class sends most of their papers via computer, with three handwritten and sent by regular mail and a fourth handwritten one sent late and arriving in mid-April with the set of goodbye letters from Kate's class.

Kate was disappointed in the outcome of these papers. Most of her students were relatively unengaged in their writing and approached the task mechanically, as an assignment to be done just for school. According to Kate, problems arose because she wanted her students to do research in the library, but the school and local libraries only had books about the royal family, Florence Nightingale, and the sufragettes. Indeed, there were few books on famous women in the libraries and virtually none on famous black women.[12] Therefore, Kate's students' topics were restricted even though a few branched out; for example, Susanna wrote about Janet Jackson and Kuldeep wrote about "My Mum."

The Writing. The two girls, Belle and Elizabeth, enjoy writing this paper, while the two boys, Iggy and Torch have difficulty finding a way to identify with it. Iggy and Torch compare writing the women in history paper to writing a "book report," a kind of writing they define as boring and unimaginative, involving only the chronological retelling of facts that other people have already written about. Belle too sees this piece much like a book report but one she finds interesting. Elizabeth approaches the task differently. She too thinks book reports are dull, but does not see the women in history paper as anything like a book report. Elizabeth says that she chooses to write about Winnie Mandela because "I wanted to do someone political, that has . . .

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[12] Judy's group was particularly fortunate that Judy had collected a number of materials and books on famous women for her classroom as part of her special work in the area of women's studies. Had she not been engaged in these special projects, Judy suspects that her group would have had difficulty finding sufficient resource materials as well.

influenced my life in some way" (Interview, March 24, 1988). In her paper Elizabeth explains what she has learned from this important figure, putting herself into her essay and enjoying the writing.

Torch explains that he writes about Rosa Parks because she is on a list Judy distributes. Similarly Iggy says that he selected Mother Teresa because, "I just found somebody . . . that's known, and I did her" (Interview, April 5, 1988). When they write, Torch and Iggy repeat a series of facts from their reading, spending minimal time. Both boys say that they preferred writing the spooky tales and their autobiographies, not because that writing was easier than this "report" on famous women but because they could use their imaginations and put themselves into these other pieces. Before exerting more than a miminal effort on the women and history paper, both Torch and Iggy would have to feel a personal connection to the writing. Elizabeth, Torch, and Iggy agree that it makes no sense to write if they cannot use their imaginations, if they are restricted to writing what other people think instead of what they think. Torch and Iggy need help seeing how to put themselves into this writing.

Belle presents yet another profile. She seems to be unaware of the importance of projecting herself into her writing. She sees the women in history paper as a report and is happy to repeat what others have already written. Belle says that if she is interested in the topic of the report, she is interested in the writing. About her Louisa May Alcott "report," she says:

> I like this report a lot because I had an interest in her. . . . It was like really sad, so I just wanted to write about her. She really inspired me. (Interview, March 24, 1988)

Elizabeth, Torch, Iggy, and Belle show a range of ways sixth graders interpret essay writing. Elizabeth interprets the task as Judy and the judges in the NOW essay contest do. She integrates her own ideas with her reading. The other three interpret this essay as a school report in which they are to repeat a set of facts that they gather from books. Torch and Iggy know that a report that calls only for regurgiation is uninteresting; however, they are unable to imagine this writing any other way. Belle appears happy with this kind of task.

Elizabeth's writing is informative since she appears to have made the most successful transition into essay writing. Especially interesting is how she draws from her reading and uses her time. She notes that Mandela "wasn't in any history books I've ever read," but she discovers Mandela's autobiography and a "little biography on her that I got too." Elizabeth describes how she uses the autobiography as a basis for her writing:

> I took her autobiography, and I was reading it, and I would circle paragraphs that I liked in it. And I thought that would be good to write in it then. I took those paragraphs and I made—I put them in my own words, and put them down on scratch paper, and it was five pages long. (laugh) (Interview, March 24, 1988)

After writing a draft, Elizabeth seeks help from a number of people: Judy; another teacher, Frank Forman; friends; and her parents. She says that she read her paragraphs to the teachers who "talked to me about them." She also says that "Ms. Logan would change wording." Besides talking to her friends about her ideas, one friend and her dad help her type.

Elizabeth opens:

> Winnie Mandela: The Soul of South Africa
>
> Winnie Mandela has always seemed important to me because she fights oppression. She knew that what was going on in South Africa was wrong and she was prepared from childhood to fight until there was a change. As Winnie Mandela once said in her childhood

> years, "If they failed in those nine Xhosa wars, I am one of them and I will start from where those Xhosa's left off and I will get my land back." She was speaking about the wars that black people waged against white people and lost. All her life she tried to get the land of all South African's back from white control and she probably will keep trying until she dies. And even then her soul will live on in the thousands of other black people who follow her lead.

Elizabeth's issue-focussed essay continues, with a paragraph about Winnie Mandela's childhood and her relationship with her parents, paragraphs on how she met and married Nelson Mandela, his years underground, his imprisonment, Winnie Mandela's displacement from her home, and her own political evolution. Elizabeth makes her points with examples of Winnie Mandela's independent political activities:

> In Brandfort Winnie made a lot of changes. She went in stores no black went into. At the police station she used the white entrance. She went into the white side of the post office. At the supermarket blacks were supposed to use little windows to do their shopping, but when Winnie started shopping inside the other blacks did too. Some stores even had to close the windows. Also there was a dress shop where blacks had to stand outside and point to which dresses they liked; they were not allowed to touch them. One day, Winnie wanted to but a dress for her daughter. She and the sales lady had a furious argument. This incident became the talk of the town and the blacks went on strike. Now any black can go in and buy a dress.

Elizabeth concludes with what she takes away for herself:

> To me, Winnie Mandela is someone to look up to. I truly believe that even though Winnie Mandela changed only a small part of apartheid in South Africa, she is to be greatly admired throughout the world for her great leadership and commitment in the struggle. She had shown great courage and strength by breaking the law in a country that hates black people so much that they will even jail the children. She had had her husband taken away from her, been banished from her home and banned from communicating with other people, but still she fights. I would like to be like this woman—able to fight, able to care and able to commit myself totally to what I believe in.

Elizabeth is an engaged and committed writer with a well-developed sense of essay writing. Besides knowing what is expected, she spends the time and seeks the help she needs to produce her best product. She exercises her creativity to make writing the essay personally meaningful.

By contrast, Torch, who shows little personal attachment to his women in history essay, decides that since about two weeks of class time are allocated for this writing, he will "just work on it every time I'm in school, have fun when I'm outa school." He claims, "I had most of it done pretty quick." He feels that the British students will prefer his autobiography to this essay on Rosa Parks. When asked if he thinks they will find any part of the Rosa Parks essay interesting, he recalls one incident:

> They might find it interesting that, about times here when everybody was so racist, and how Rosa Parks stood up, and like how nobody would ride the buses, and . . . they protested against that. (Interview, April 5, 1988)

Torch uses his source material in a way that works against his becoming involved. Unlike Elizabeth who focuses her writing around issues in Mandela's life, Torch presents a chronology of the facts of Parks's life:

> I got a book about Rosa Parks, about her life, and then I just kind of, um, I read the book through, and like jotted down lots of notes about important stuff about her, like incidents that happened. And then out of that and from what I could remember, I just took down on the notes, tried to like orderize them, the notes, on what would go first, like where she was born and stuff. And then I just put it into this. I just wrote it, and then like corrected it—did my final draft on it. (Interview, April 5, 1988)

When he writes, Torch does not include any explicit statement about the meaning of his topic. Whereas Elizabeth opens with a point of view and a statement about personal meaning ("Winnie Mandela has always seemed important to me because she fights oppression"), Torch starts his chronological narrative by giving a fact, the date of Rosa Parks's birth, and asserting that she was "courageous" and "would change the world."

> On Friday Febuary 4, 1913 a very courageous woman was born. Although no one knew it at the time this woman would change the world. The woman was Rosa McCauley.

As Torch recounts key events in Parks's life, especially as he discusses her political activities, he demonstrates her courage, but he does not explain how she changes the world. His last two paragraphs are the only ones to address the bus boycott and the effects of her work, but these are the least well-developed:

> Rosa worked in a department store doing sewing alterations. She walked a mile to work and back every day. One day after leaving work exhausted, Rosa got on a bus to ride home. Rosa hated riding the bus because it reminded her of how much she hated segretation. Each time she sat in the seats at the back of the bus, a little part of her died. On this Thursday December 1, 1955 Rosa was arrested on the bus for not giving up her seat to a white person.
>
> Rosa became famous for not following the rules. Because Rosa and all the blacks towns people hated the rules of Montgomery also December 1 became a day when blacks boycotted the buses. That was to be remembered for a long time.

Given Torch's lack of motivation and his two-week writing process, he seems to have stopped short of finishing his paper. Although at times he writes with feeling and fluency, he does not sustain a personal connection to this writing.

Whereas Torch is relatively unengaged, Iggy is completely detached from his essay about Mother Teresa, spending only three days on it. His writing reflects his lack of effort. His sources are "books and encyclopedias." Like Torch, he begins with a set of facts about Mother Teresa's life:

> On August 29, 1910, a child was born to an Albanion couple living in Skopje, Macedonia, which was to become part of Yugoslavia. This childs name was Gonxha, Agnes, Bejaxhia, a name less easy for Western tongues to pronounce. She was soon to become Mother Teresa.

After presenting a couple more facts about her career, Iggy continues with a list of unsupported opinions and assertions about what he claims to have learned:

> I think mother Teresa is a brilliant woman, I have learned a lot from her.
>
> I have learned to value life and to cherish all that I may recieve
>
> I have learned to help people nomatter if they ar friend or foe.

> She has taught to help people have less than I.
>
> Mother Teresa is a woman full of compassion.

He ends with a few more facts:

> She has convents all over the wor( )
> Some of the places are Calcutta, Beng( ), and San Francisco.
>
> I went to the convent in San Francisco. The nuns their were very Nice. I think many people have learned things froms mother Teresa's deeds.

Iggy explains that his mother made him visit the convent and volunteers, "I don't know why." Iggy says he received no help on any part of this writing. He admits that he did not like writing the women in history paper because "It had to be the facts." He contrasts this essay to his autobiography, a kind of writing he felt free to "put creativity into," where he says, "I could make up mostly what I wanted" (Interview, April 5, 1988). Iggy also reveals that he enjoyed writing his spooky tale which "I tried to make it as good as I can." Referring to the essay on Mother Teresa, he says, "I didn't try so much in this one." Like Torch, Iggy's lack of effort coincides with his lack of motivation.

As with her other pieces for the exchange, Belle is enthusiastic. Her "report" on Louisa May Alcott begins as a chronology which evolves into a set of quickly shifting topics, in a stream of consciousness that is reminiscent of much of her oral language. Belle begins with the usual facts:

> Louisa May Alcott was born on Nov. 2, 183(). She was the 2nd born. Her older sisters name was Anna Alcott.

Then, without warning, she moves to a new, out-of-sequence topic:

> Her father was a man of dreams but instead of dreaming, he acted them out. This did have an effect on the family in many ways, but the Alcotts didn't mind. Well at least they didn't think so at the moment!

From here Belle shifts the topic to moving; although she connects it to Louisa's father's dreaming, the dreams are suddenly subordinated:

> The Alcotts moved constatly because her fathers dreams didn't work out.

The topic of the family move continues for a few more sentences, ending with the assertion that Louisa's mother, Abba, did not mind moving. Then Belle jumps to a discussion of Abba's illness. Toward the end of her paper, Belle writes a focused paragraph about a "strange encounter":

> Louisa did have some pretty strange encounter when she was young. Like one time she had come home from her fathers school and she heard some noises in the ove-n, so she walked over to the oven and opeaned it up and she screamed! In her oven was a black man. Her mother heard the scream and ran into the kitchean. Abba explained to Louisa that she was hiding him and not to say anything about him. So Louisa did what she was told and kept quiet. Another time she was walking to the park with her mom and she fell into a frog pond and out of nowhere a slave ran out and saved her and ran away without even getting a thank you.

In her interview, Belle clarifies the fact that the man in the oven is a slave whom Louisa's mother was hiding and that he was the same slave who, out of gratitude, saved Louisa when she fell in the pond:

> I included the time like the slaves—the slave um, the little black boy or whatever. He saved her from the pond. And the time that he's in the oven. (Interview, May 24, 1988)

Belle's mother helps her read the book from which she gets her information and encourages Belle to correct her errors before she hands in her paper. Seemingly unaware of what an essay is, Belle is pleased with her final product, proclaiming, "It was probably one of the best papers that I wrote" (Interview, May 24, 1988). When asked if she had to choose between sending her autobiography or this paper to England which she would send, she hestitates more than any other focal student. Although, like the others, she says she would send her autobiography, she couches her reply:

> I like them both . . . I'd probably just staple Louisa May Alcott to my autobiography. Probably my autobiography because that's like what you need, I mean, to tell the other person. And then I'd probably send the Louisa May Alcott on my own money. How many stamps does it take to send it to England from California? (Interview, March 24, 1988)

Of the writing from Kate's class, Susanna's report, though not on a usual topic, is fairly typical in that it is purely a rendering of the facts of Janet Jackson's life. Susanna opens:

> Twenty years ago a little girl was born in to the famous jackson family.she is the youngest out of nine children with six brothers andthree sist ers.

Susanna then tells about Jackson's rise to fame with her hit "Dreamstreet" which was released when she was 18 and was "the brightist new star on telev ison show FAME." She provides some interesting details:

> lately she has a key in the hoop of her earing. some people say it isthe key to her heart and others say it the key to the animal cage(thejackson has a miniature zoo on the grounds around th eir home).

Susanna concludes: "she has been to a disco once at a studio 54 in new york."

Besides being restricted in their topic choice, Kate also believes that sending these pieces are sent on the computer added further complications. The students did not have enough time on the computers to write extended pieces, and some of them were struggling with typing. In addition, the technical support was inadequate, and so Kate found her time taken with the logistics of computer mail, leaving her less time than usual to support her students with their writing.

An Absence of Response and Conclusions. Neither class provides the other with a formal response to this writing. Judy's students do not even comment much on this British writing in their interviews. Belle does say that she was absent when the British women in history papers first came and that she did not see them until about two weeks later. Belle recalls reading several of the girls', including Susanna's piece on Janet Jackson, but makes no further comments.

In Kate's class this exchange proved problematic, mostly because few books on women in history were available for her students, and they needed adequate reference materials in order to be able to do the task well. In addition, at this point in the year Kate was spending whatever free time she had trying to establish a computer link with Judy's class, something that she eventually decided was not worth the energy. In spite of these difficulties, in this exchange the word count for Kate's students is only slightly less than for Judy's (Table 3.1).

U.S. Dramatic Monologues

Moving beyond the written women in history papers, Judy's students did written and then oral presentations, both as a celebration of black history month and as an oral piece to send to England. Judy's students chose their subjects from lists of famous black figures. Judy explains:

> We had completed the essays for . . . women's history month, where they had done research on a woman, and um written essays about a woman that they admired, and then read these essays to the class. So I decided that the next thing would be to do research and write a paper, but then do a monologue with the class, without the paper in front of them, so that they had to internalize the information, and become that person. So I was trying to take the last assignment one step further. (Judy Logan, Interview, May 19, 1988)

Since the final version is to be an oral presentation, for this assignment writing serves mainly to help students prepare. They are to write the report which they then speak from note cards or from memory in front of the class. When the students perform their actual monologue, Judy encourages them to dress as their figures, to bring in music if that is appropriate, "to bring in a prop that represented that person"—in other words to put on a show. As they speak, a tape recorder is running so that their oral performances can be sent to England.

Judy had originally thought the students would send their written scripts to England, but she recalls how she and the students changed those plans:

> We had decided that this would be the next thing that we sent to England, but I actually never sent the papers that they wrote. We sent the tape instead. And then I decided to photograph them, since their costumes and their props were part of the assignment. (Interview, May 19, 1988)

At this time in the year Judy and her students construct tasks in a fully collaborative way. In contrast to the women in history piece, when the students had varying senses of participation in selecting their topics for writing, Judy explains the collaborative decisions surrounding the monologues. About deciding to make a tape, she says:

> It evolved through our talking about um oral language and presentations to the class, and how how they had done such a good job of reading their papers out loud and that was a wonderful skill to have. And then the next step was to be able to speak, without just reading what they had written, but based on having written something, internalized it, and then be able to just use their brain to talk. (Interview, May 19, 1988)

To help her students prepare their monologues and move beyond the reports many of them wrote for the women in history paper, Judy discussed ways of collecting information in addition to library research:

> We talked about um other ways of collecting information, like if they had Billie Holliday. I talked about going to the library and getting music. . . . We talked about writing to people if they were still alive, like Rosa Parks, or um interviewing people who knew . . . those people. So I tried to get their interviewing skills to branch out from just going to the media center or going to the local library. (Interview, May 19, 1988)

She explains further,

> I was trying to get you know primary resource things as well as secondary resources. Um I talked to them about using the Reader's Guide. Trishia was doing Alice Walker, and I took her up and showed her, I took her up individually during Frank's class, and showed her how to use the Reader's Guide. And then I have a whole bunch of Ms. Magazines over there on my shelf for my homeroom for assisting in silent reading, and once she figured out the ti— the dates, that they had articles either by Alice Walker or about Alice Walker, she went through the stack of magazines and picked out the ones that um, that were appropriate. (Interview, May 19, 1988)

Judy concludes, "It was a popular assignment."

Most of the boys selected sports figures, and all selected males. The girls chose varied figures; although most chose females, a number selected males.

Both Judy and her students say that the most exciting monologue was Christine's on Rosa Parks. She came dressed for the part: "Christine of course had a Rosa Parks costume, complete with hat and glasses and shawl" (Logan Interview, May 19, 1988) Judy describes the importance of this opportunity for Christine:

> Christine I think did the best job . . . I was so glad I did this unit because it's the first time Christine really shined. She's not an identified gifted child, and she doesn't test that well. And frankly, up until this point, I was wondering, even though she's really sweet and I like her a lot, I was wondering, you know, what is Christine doing in this class and how did she get here. But it's a gifted and talented program, and she has a lot of talent, and this was the first assignment that really brought out her . . . acting ability. . . . The whole class knew that Christine's performance was far superior to anything else that had been done. And so it gave her a chance to be outstanding in the class for the first time. (Interview, May 19, 1988)

For many students other than Christine, these monologues about famous black figures turn out to be a practicing ground for their next monologues on the Greeks which are not sent to England. Judy assesses these first dramatic monologues as "uneven" and claims that her students "have done much better on the deities one." And Christine's good work plays a key role in the other students' improvement. They talk about what Christine did well and how they will apply what they learned to their next assignment on Greek deities. Judy explains how Christine's performance helped the others:

> It gave them something to model after, so that instead of just becoming one more assignment, they could see how someone could take an assignment like that and really be creative with it. And it has helped their—the rest of their presentations.

Elizabeth concurs:

> And from that I kind of—my next monologue I dressed up and I got myself a costume cause . . . I learned from hers and from the other ones how to make it even better than this one, and how to make it even better. And then the next one we did, I did Helen of Troy. Then I dressed up and I had—I memorized it cause she had hers memorized too. And I dressed up and I memorized it. (Interview, May 16, 1988)

Learning from Christine's Model Monologue. The opening lines of a transcript of Christine's monologue give a sense, albeit incomplete, of how Christine helps her audience enter Parks's world:

> Hello everyone. My name is Rosa Parks. Children, when I was young, my name was Rosa Macauley. . . . My momma's name was Leona. She was a teacher for a while. My daddy, he was a carpenter.

She presents several moving scenes from Parks's life, and although herself white, she presents them in personal and colloquial terms. Her section on the Ku Klux Klan provides a typical example of her rhetorical style:

> Have you children ever heard of the Ku Klux Klan? Well where I grew up, groups of white men wearing white bed sheets, with white hoods to cover their faces, they hated Black people, so they would do awful things to folks like burn everything they had or drive them out of their home and beat or kill them. Does that sound terrible, children? It was terrible. It was the terrible truth. Some nights I would not go to sleep because I knew those Klansmen might bust into our house. I would stay up with my grandfather, listening and waiting. They never came to our house, but I spent many a sleepless night.

Judy observes, "She had obviously memorized it, not just memorized it but she had her pauses down, she had her, she took on the persona and the voice of Rosa Parks."

The students explain specifically what they learned. Elizabeth recounts:

> There's one person that's really good. Her name is Christine. She she did Rosa Parks, and she like talked with a Southern accent and she kept addressing her audience during the thing, and it was good. It was really good. . . . Like she said, she would say, "Does that sound silly, children? Well it wasn't silly." She kept saying children, and it was good. (Interview, May 16, 1988)

Iggy says that some of the monologues in his class were boring but most were good. When asked which he liked, he refers to Christine's:

> She did Rosa Parks. She did, "Hello children. My name's Rosa Parks." And stuff like that. So that was good. She had a costume and everything. (Interview, May 16, 1988)

Belle also volunteers:

> Some of them were boring. The best one was Rosa Parks, with Christine. Did you hear that? That was so good. She was all, that was really good, that was my favorite. . . . She did it like, "Hi children, I'm Rosa Parks." She had the accent, and she was all dressed up and everything. And it was like it was really her. It was pretty neat how she—how she wrote it. I think it was really neat. I think that was good. That was the best. (Interview, June 3, 1988)

Torch concludes:

> You know Christine? Well she did Rosa Parks. That was like a big deal. Everybody liked that one. . . . cause she like acted it out and she said it in like a voice, and she memorized the whole thing. It was pretty long. She gave a lot of stuff. And I did a thing on Rosa Parks before that, and I got this book, and I could tell that she got lots of that stuff out of the book that I read cause it was the same thing. (Interview, May 16, 1988)

Because Christine was such a hit in class, Judy invited her, along with several others, to perform her monologue before a group of 30 other teachers to whom Judy was giving a workshop on including women in the curriculum. Judy recalls:

> Christine did her Rosa Parks in an afternoon workshop for about thirty teachers. And she did, it was the same performance. It was, you know, stunning. She was in the character, in the voice. (Interview, May 19, 1988)

Focal Monologues. For her own dramatic monologue on Frederick Douglass, Elizabeth approaches Christine's level of sophistication in content but not in style. So that she can connect to the content, Elizabeth predictably selects someone in whom she is interested politically. Before she settles on Douglass, she explores choosing two others, a poet and Shirley Chisolm, but says that she selects Douglass for the following reasons:

> I wanted to pick someone who's kind of political. You know, and a person who was like— Well, see, I saw this movie about John Brown and there was this thing that mentioned Fredrick Douglass in it. It had a lot about Fredrick Douglass in it actually. And um then, I said oh, I could do Fredrick Douglass for my dramatic monologue. And I wanted to learn more about him, so I just kind of decided to do him for my dramatic monologue. (Interview, May 16, 1988)

Elizabeth begins her monologue:

> Good morning, brothers and sisters. My name is Frederick Douglass and I'm here to speak to you about the hardships of slavery and the goodness of freedom. Everyone of you was born free and have never endured the hardships of slavery. In the life of slavery you are sometimes whipped once a week. You are bought and sold like things—underfed, not paid and treated like pieces of junk.

Elizabeth likes her introduction and thinks it is the part of her monologue that the British students will like best. She comments:

> See, when I did that, I just kind of I didn't get that from any books . . . Cause that's not really like information. Well, kind of it is, but I mean just kind of. I don't know, its hard to explain. . . . I just wanted a good thing to start it off with so that everyone would get interested, and um let's see, I just kind of, I knew that the stuff about like that you're underpaid—underfed and not paid and treated like pieces of junk. I mean I knew that stuff, so I decided to add it just so everybody else would know. (Interview, May 16, 1988)

Elizabeth continues by narrating in some detail the story of Douglass' life—his time as a slave, his escape, and his work for the abolition of slavery. She says that these parts came from books in the library and from his speeches. She comments, "They have like six books of Fredrick Douglass." She first took notes from the books. Then, as with her women in history paper, she says, "I just kind of put it down on paper in my own words and sentences."

In her May interview she reads a transcript of her monologue and stops to explain how she wrote and why she wrote what she did. While many students are not articulate about their choices as a writer and their reasons for their choices, Elizabeth is aware of, articulate about, and enjoys explaining why she includes each key point. Her main criteria for selecting information is her judgment of its importance. About her ending, which occurs when Lincoln signs the Emancipation Proclamation, she says, "I ended there because I didn't think it would sound right if I went and I said I died."

As for style, when she presents her monologue to the class, unlike Christine, she does not wear a costume. Her main prop is a poster which she describes:

> When I was saying my monologue, I had a big poster board with pictures, little pictures of like from one of the books of what happened, and there's a picture of him beating up his slave breaker. (Interview, May 16, 1988)

Elizabeth explains how hard she practiced before this oral event:

> I really practiced saying my things. Cause see we weren't, allowed to read it from the paper. We just had to look at our notes, so I just practiced looking at my notes and like I practiced for the person who comes to babysit for my brother on Sunday nights. And then some friends of ours and my mom and my dad and my brother. (Interview, May 16, 1988)

Elizabeth gets help at home, from her mother who helps her select material from the books she reads and talks to her about her writing and from a family friend who goes with her to the library and helps her xerox pictures. Elizabeth says that she works hard on this assignment, spending "a week maybe doing some stuff after school, and I worked really hard on the weekend before it was due." What is missing is the personal immediacy and the in-character colloquial talk that Christine includes.

Torch works hard on his monologue and is interested in his topic but says that he has difficulty memorizing things and that he got "stage fright." He only gets out a little over 200 words on Michael Jordan, the basketball star. About his choice of Jackson, he reports:

> I did this cause I love basketball. I really like basketball. Michael Jordan, he's my favorite player. And so that's why I did it on him. (Interview, May 16, 1988)

When Judy first describes the assignment, Torch grabs Jordon:

> She said um like someone a famous black American and right away I thought my favorite one was Michael Jordan. He's black and so I asked if I could do him, and she said yeah, and I just did him. (Interview, May 16, 1988)

Although others want to select Jordan, Torch reports, "I beat them to it."

Torch already knows a lot about Jordan before he starts. He says:

> I have a magazine that has an interview on him that has some stuff, and I watch a lot of the basketball games of his and stuff, and see him on t.v. and stuff. He's really popular . . . He earned $4,000,000 for like all of his toys that he produces. Like I'm wearing some of his shoes right now. These are Nike Airs, and then this little guy, this is supposed to be Jordan. It's like his symbol of him. He's doing the splits with the ball in his hand, just to slam dunk. (Interview, May 16, 1988)

Torch begins his monologue by giving statistics about Jordan's basketball feats. He then concludes as follows:

> My parents are the vice-president of a company called Jump. It stands for Jordan Universal Marketing Promotions. On my black Corvette my license plate is Jump23. I also own a Chevrolet and a Porsche. I feel that I am the key to my team. I score 35% of my team points. I have the most block shots for a guard since 1973. The most difficult game that I've probably played was January 20. Even though I had 31 points and 7 rebounds, I was playing with five stitches in my lip, a sprained right wrist, a sore hip and a shot of novocaine.

To write his monologue, Torch explains what he does:

> What I, what I do is I just take a bunch of notes of some stuff, and then of what I know. And then I write it over into a rough draft. I see if it'll be okay, and then I like make changes and stuff, and put it into this. (Interview, May 16, 1988)

Torch spends hours in school gathering material and taking notes as well as a couple of hours at home. Writing the first draft is quick for Torch, "maybe half an hour or something." To prepare to present his monologue, Torch takes additional time:

> Well I recited it to myself, tried to memorize it and stuff cause I knew most of this stuff of like his scoring average and stuff. Then I just had to remember some stuff. I took notes at first but then I didn't really need them. (Interview, May 16, 1988)

Torch comes prepared with a costume but he does not get to present his monologue on the scheduled day. When his turn comes, he does not wear his costume. Typical for Torch, he knows that he could have done a better job. He says:

> I could have done more stuff if like I did a little more research on him. But there was a thing they had, a big article, like fourteen pages or something on the Sports Illustrated there, but they got stolen from the library, so then I couldn't get any more out of them. (Interview, May 16, 1988)

When asked what parts of his monologue he likes best, Torch says he likes the part that contains Jordan's scoring statistics, but about the kids in England he says, "Maybe they'll like his black Corvette or his Porsche."

When Iggy does his dramatic monologue, Judy explains that he has significant difficulty:

> Iggy had a hard time. Iggy offered to go very first, and he was really enthusiastic because he had this little beard, that he had painted. He had used like eyebrow pencil or something to put this beard on, and I think he had a hat and a tie. I don't remember exactly, but he was in costume. He was very enthusiastic. He got up on the stool, and then he was sort of overwhelmed. Everyone was sitting there looking at him, and he wasn't as prepared as he thought he was, and so he stumbled a few times, and he got very discouraged with himself because he was stumbling. And I think, I can't remember whether he didn't finish the report, or whether he finished it, but he really didn't want to, because he wanted to go again later. And at first I said, you know, no we've got to have everybody go first. And then finally I let him go. (Interview, May 19, 1988)

On his second go round Iggy does improve slightly, but overall he evaluates his efforts negatively: "Mine was bad cause I didn't write enough." (Interview, May 16, 1988). About his first performance, which was closer to 100 words while Christine's was closer to 1,000 words, he says:

> I just messed up by not remembering it when I was saying it, cause I kept on getting mixed up, and I kinda put the words—like I had little inserts and stuff. So that's what messed me up. . . . And I was supposed to memorize it. So she said it was unacceptable. (Interview, May 16, 1988)

And about his second attempt, he concludes, "I tried to do it again. This one was even worse" (Interview, May 16, 1988).

The text of Iggy's monologue follows:

> Hi, I'm Gordon Parks. I was born in 1911. My old hometown was Fort Scott, Kansas. I was born there. I left home at sixteen. I was a semi-pro basketball player, but I thought I could do more with my life than that. I was in my late thirties when I started photography. I was a photographer for Time magazine. I'm not only a photographer, I also compose music and write books. Some of poetry, most biographical. One thing that has moved me the most besides the death of my parents was the death of Malcolm Max. One day the most sad days of my life the day people came together to mourn. My outstanding photography is known all over the world.

Iggy says he spent two days working on the Parks monologue but that he was "disorganized." He went to the library for information and recalls:

> It wasn't that big of a report in the beginning. Some people did big reports. Some people did boring reports. Some people did short reports like mine. Mine was boring. And some people did good reports. (Interview, May 16, 1988)

Besides his problems with his presentation and his preparation, Iggy was never interested in Gordon Parks. He originally wanted to present Mike Tyson, the boxer, but could not find enough information and had to change. By the time he decided against Tyson, Gordon Parks was all that was left.

Like Iggy, Belle does a short monologue, in the 100 word range, on someone who does not interest her. Belle presents Maya Angelou:

> I needed somebody and I didn't really know who . . . to pick, and then I saw that she had picked for us, and I got Maya Angelou. And I never heard of her at all. . . . If it was my choice, I probably— I didn't know who she was, so I probably wouldn't have picked her. But she's a pretty interesting woman. (Interview, June 3, 1988)

Belle does not know that she could have exercised more personal choice.

To prepare her monologue, Belle goes to the library for information and reports that she looked Angelou up in several encyclopedias. The librarian also found some of Angelou's books for her. However, to save time, Belle relies on the encyclopedia:

> Instead of looking at an encyclopedia, I could've read the books, but that would've taken me like two weeks, cause they're like that thick. So it was, it's easier. But if you read them, they're pretty interesting, cause I started to read one of them. I got like maybe like a fourth through, and then I finally said, I have to totally get an encyclopedia about this. (Interview, June 3, 1988)

Belle actually relies mostly on "one essay" in "the black important person encyclopedia." About her writing process she says, "Some people like read the whole thing then do it, but I can't. I just do it like little piece by piece, and just kinda print it in my own words." At this point, Belle claims, "I had like a paper, like four pages long, full of notes about her." She selects material to include based on what she decides is "interesting." She decides what is interesting by putting herself in the place of someone listening to a report and deciding whether as a listener "I would find that was interesting."

The four pages of notes are reduced to the following monologue:

> Hi, my name is Maya Angelou. I am very good at writing, dancing and acting and singing. I was born on April 4, 1928 in St. Louis, Missouri. Some of the books I've written are, I

> Know Why The Caged Bird Sings, Just Give Me A Cool Drink Before I Die and Still I Still I Rise and many more. I was named Woman of the Year by Ladies Home Journal for communications. And in 1977 I was nominated for an Emmy for my portrayal of Nile Bono in Roots. I can speak French, Spanish, Arabic (inaudible) and English. I have one son named Guy Johnson and I now live in Sonoma, California at the age of sixty.

Anticipating Response. At the time of her dramatic monologue, Elizabeth makes an important observation about her changing feelings about sending her writing to England:

> It doesn't make me worried that I'm not going to do a good job anymore because I think that I'm getting to know the people over there. And they kind of seem like my friends now. (Interview, May 16, 1988)

For Elizabeth this audience of peers is important. She admits:

> When I'm going to be reading it to someone or someone else is going to read it or something they're gonna see me saying it, I think that I just kind of work harder. (Interview, May 16, 1988)

The other students do not comment on the British audience at this point.

Goodbye Letters

The last British letters arrive in early May and are responses to the response letters they received from Judy's students about their autobiographies. Although 19 of Kate's students write, five of them write two letters each and one, Nicola, writes three letters for a total of 26 letters from England. The response letters to the British autobiographies were completed in Judy's class in mid-March and appear to have arrived in Kate's classroom in mid-April, just before these final letters are written.

In their final letters, the British students follow the personal tone set by Judy's students in their autobiography response letters. They are not responding to any writing in particular and use these letters to answer questions posed by their partners and ask questions of their own. Some give their home addresses (six students include home addresses with two of them writing to two of Judy's students, so that eight of Judy's students receive British home addresses). Some also include teen magazines, posters, and stickers. A few say a few words about the autobiographies from Judy's students. All focal students except Iggy receive a letter.

Judy's students write goodbye letters immediately after they receive the final letters from England. Although the class is working on controversial issues papers at the end of the year and plans to send them to England, they never do. Therefore, these letters are the last writing from the United States to England and appear to have been written quickly, just to get a reply in the mail. The letters from Judy's students continue the informal and personal tone, with most students telling about a recent camping trip to Kirby Cove and with eight including their home addresses.

The Writing. From Kate's class, when Kenneth writes to Torch, he complains:

> Dear Torch Johnson I was disapponted Because I dident get no work from you. I hope you will send me some of your work soon.

He then continues to "tell" Torch about sports in London and offers to send Torch posters of his favorite soccer team, Liverpool F.C. Kenneth concludes his letter, I would like to know who your famose footballer are But do send me some work.

By

Kenneth Lambie

Besides writing a letter, Susanna sends Belle several copies of Just Seventeen, a popular magazine for teenage girls, and copies of several comic books and a video magazine. Possessing these artifacts of British teen culture makes Belle popular with her classmates, who vie for a chance to look at them. Susanna begins her letter to Belle, "Thank you for your letter." She then mentions who her best friends are and asks two questions, each a separate paragraph:

> Do you know How much the doller is to the pound?
>
> I like to watch videos do you?

She mentions the titles of five movies she has seen and then writes, "I mostly like Horrors Do you?" She concludes with a P.S.: "I would like to keep in touch hers my home address" which she then provides.

Finally, Farah sends Elizabeth stickers and a letter in which she begins: "Hallo from England! I really enjoyed the comic you sent me. Thanks. You asked me about channels of television:—" And Farah goes on to list each of the four U.K. channels with a sampling of the shows each one features. She then explains the latest trends in clothes and asks what types of music Elizabeth likes after which she tells her own preferences. She concludes with a set of questions of her own and a word about the stickers:

> What are your teachers like? Do they get on your nerves?
> Some of our teachers are really boring. One or two are better.
> How many channels of television do you have? What are the best programs? Have you heard of East enders yet. I'm sending you some stickers—the sticker thats missing was Charlie Sheen. My friend wanted that.
> Write Soon Please.
> Bye!
> From your friend in England!
>
> Farah Malik

In Judy's class, Belle writes to Susanna:

> Dear Susanna,
>
> Hi, how are you? I'm great, just in case you wanted to know. (Ha Ha) We just got back from our camping trip and boy was it fun!!!! We went to Kirby Cove which is across the golden gate bridge and in the marin headlands. We had a great time at the beach and at the old Forts. Well I have to go now so Bye!
>
> Luv,
> Belle Sullivan

Belle then includes her address.

Iggy, apparently feeling guilty, writes to Jason, although he says little and unlike most of the others does not mention the camping trip:

> Dear Jason
>
> I'm Sorry I didnt send you a copy of fangoria. I dont many Closing remarks, except for.
> Hope to keep in touch
>
> Your friend Iggy

Iggy was on the trip, as Coco's letter to Stavros reveals:

> We just come back from our camping trip. I had a good time. Jake and Iggy raided our tent. We went to the beach. We stayed there for three days and two nights. We found star fish. We were in a small tent. We couldn't take a bath. We had nasty food. My friends and I took down Jake's tent. he got mad. We play truth or dare with Jake and Iggy.

Those who write fuller letters add detail about the trip. Elizabeth and Torch do not reply at this point.

U.K. Magazines

The last writing from England is a set of six elaborate and polished magazines, each written by three or four British students. The groups are composed of single genders, with the three groups of girls writing more than any of the three groups of boys. The longest, *It's Push* at 75 pages is written by Farah, Nicola, Joanna, and Kelly. Helen, Elif, Jane, and Susanna write 49 pages for their magazine *Yes* while Veronica, Kate, Maria, and Jenny in *G'Day to the USA* write 34 pages. Two of the boys' groups write only 13 pages: Jason, James, David Smith, and Oben for *Hot Max* and David Burgess, Daniel, and Christos for *Top Mag*. Still not approaching the scope of any of the girls' groups, the other boys' group consisting of Stavros, Kenneth, Attila, and Kuldeep, writes 23 pages in their magazine, *Gizmo*.

The magazines come with colorfully illustrated covers on heavy, laminated paper, giving them a durable and glossy feel. All are bound with three staples along the left side. They are realistic imitations of actual magazines; two covers even contain information about cost (50 pence in one case and 45 pence in another) and one sports a date and information that the magazine comes out "every Wednesday."

The table of contents from *It's Push* shows the different types of articles that can be found across the set:[13]

> Contents
>
> 1 The Plane Crash—story by Nicola
> 7 Don't Go To Sleep—story by Farah
> 23 The Hallowe'en Mysterie—story by Joanna
> 31 Fan clubs [lists real addresses for fan clubs for two popular rock groups and two popular singers, with advice about mailing]
> 33 —> Posters [cut out magazine picture of a singer dancing to her own music, with lyrics included in magazine]
> 39 Small Talk [gossip column]

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[13] When the section labels are not self evident, descriptions of the content of the section are included in brackets. The numbers to the left of the section labels indicate the page number for the section.

41	Bits and Bobs Page [reviews of films and records, list of famous pop artists with birthdays in May]
43	Brat Packers [list of male stars and their "leading ladies"]
45	With A Little Help From My Friends [lyrics from Beatle tune]
47	Fashion [magazine cut outs of different styles, cut outs of prices, labels written for clothes with editorials on when they are worn]
51	Hair styles [magazine cut outs of different hair styles, hair products, and directions for how to create styles]
55	Stars [horoscope]
57	Idea Page/ Recipes
59	Differences Between Juniour and Senior School
61	3 Typical Lessons
63	My First Day At NPCS [Northumberland Park Comprehensive School]
65	English Assessment
67	Interview With Mr Dean—tutor of 25W
69	Differences between Junior/Senior school
71	Our Timetable [school class schedule]
73	Best Friends—story by Kelly.

For all six magazines, including *It's Push*, the fiction parallels the U.S. spooky tales ("Computer Murder" and "The Ever Living" in *Hot Max*; "The Kidnapping of Nelson's Coloumn" in *Top Mag*; "Moving House Murder" and "Guess the Murder" in *G'Day to the USA*; "Milly and the Rats" in *Yes*; "Hijack Story" in *Gizmo*). The other magazines also contain writing about Northumberland Park School, often with interviews of school officials. Besides the features in *It's Push*, other magazines include advice columns, joke pages, word games, cartoons, quizzes, and articles with titles as disparate as "The Channel Tunel" to "Fashion with a Little Help from a Black Dress" to "What a London School is Really Like." Kate's young authors spent about six weeks completing their magazines.

Unfortunately, the British magazines arrive at the end of the school year in the United States, too late for Judy's students to enjoy them. Kate attributes their lateness in part to her efforts to establish the computer link and in part to her responsibilities with the GCSE examinations at this time of the year. Judy's students do not discuss the magazines in their interviews since they are concluded before the magazines arrive. Judy does keep the magazines so that her students can come back to her room and enjoy them when they return to school in the fall and so that her next year's class can enjoy them as well. By all reports they are read and appreciated by a number of students at Everett during the next school year.

Conclusions

Judy, Kate, and their students tell the story of an exchange in the making. Across three years of working together these two teachers have learned to draw out much of the potential of exchange work for their students. This report of their second year catches them in the midst of their development, building on their experiences from their previous year and looking forward to improvements in the coming year.

Judy's experiences provide important information that helps begin to answer both research questions. The contrasts between her situation and Kate's provides important information about institutional factors that support and constrain the practice of writing in the United States. Although from the U.S. vantage point, everything appears to go relatively smoothly on the British side, other than inadequate library facilities for the women in history paper, Kate emphasizes the importance of the fact that she had no support teachers working with these students, since support teachers are currently in short supply and are used mostly for crisis management. Kate fears that mixed ability teaching in England is at risk since it will only continue to work well if mixed classes have proper support staff.

Judy's experiences highlight a number of constraints faced by teachers in the United States. In the first place, school and district policies provide a number of external constraints on Judy's teaching, making it exhausting for Judy to provide the attention to her students that she gives. First, Judy has an inordinately high class enrollment, at 37 the highest of any teacher in the project on either side of the Atlantic. Coupled with her high enrollment, she has no teacher's aid and her period for preparation has been taken away. Judy observes the consequences of a student overload:

> This is how the system excludes good teachers. It gives them verbal praise, but it doesn't give them any real support in terms of aides, in the form of lower class size, in the form of a coordinating period. (Telephone conversation, August 1, 1989)

In fact, for six years Judy opted for a reduced teaching load of three or four periods a day at a reduced salary. She reports that with this reduced load she worked full time. Now that she has saved some money, she is considering exercising this option again. During the exchange year, when Judy was teaching full time, she tried to do all that is required to attend to the needs of each of her students. The inordinate work load and stress level began to affect her health. Although her students received plenty of attention, the attention comes at Judy's personal expense, and she remains dissatisfied with the amount she is able to give since it is less than she did when she was teaching part time. For the past few years Judy has experimented with cutting activities in order to preserve her own mental and physical health. During the exchange year, she cut out the "tea parties" at her house; the year after the exchange, she decided to give up the annual camping trip as well as an international lunch before the winter break.

Besides dropping these community building activities, Judy is pained by the academic losses her students suffer day to day in the classroom. Although she maintains what she considers the essence of her program, she says that large numbers of students do not receive the individual attention they need from her to reach their maximum potential. Judy reports that when her student load is too great, students with very severe problems take precedence in getting individual attention, followed by students who are stars and who know how to seek and get teacher attention, the ones Judy finds "easy to get to know."[14] Judy fears that she neglects the vast majority of her students who are in the middle, but who would greatly benefit from additional support.

Of the focal students, Judy thinks that only Elizabeth received adequate attention. She falls into the category of star, and Judy develops a deep personal relationship with her. It is also apparent that when the need arises, Elizabeth knows where to go outside the classroom for extra resources, and she has easy access to plentiful outside resources. The consequence is that Elizabeth flourishes as a writer. The other focal students fall into that middle group. With these students Judy feels that she should know more about their writing processes. She wants to be able to listen as they respond to each other's work, as they generate their ideas. She knows she needs more time to read their drafts and to give them guidance as they work on their writing. She feels that if she were more aware of their writing process she could use this knowledge to help them grow. She also feels that if she could observe and interact with them more as they wrote, she not only could provide academic input but also could build trust with more of them. Iggy, for example, who was trying to do a good job on his dramatic monologue, might have been saved some embarrassment in front of his classmates. Also, at an earlier point in his process, Judy might have been able to direct him toward a topic that really interested him. Judy feels that not only Iggy but Belle and Torch would have experienced similar rewards if she could have provided them with more individual help along the way.

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[14] What Judy means by severe problems are life-threatening ones; for example, during the 1988-89 academic year five of her students attempted suicide. Since the counselling services at her school are inadequate, she was forced to spend substantial amounts of time supporting these students and making the appropriate psychiatric referrals.

It is quite clear that as a teacher Judy is doing an extraordinary job, but given the conditions she works in, even she cannot do the kind of job she wants and society expects. Judy gives her students, including those in the middle, a great deal. Belle's attitudes could not be more positive. Torch has decided he wants to become a professional writer. And Iggy is at least doing his work, participating in class, and trying, no small accomplishments for him. Nevertheless, Judy, consistent with the goals of the educational reform movement, wants to push her students beyond the basics. She is right not to be completely satisfied. The reduced load that would really make a difference for a teacher like Judy and consequently for students like Belle, Torch, and Iggy would cost a lot of money. Only an extraordinary teacher would consider subsidizing the system by working full time for partial pay, as Judy has done in the past and is considering doing again. Many of our nation's best teachers are giving up early in their careers as they become dissatisfied with working conditions that obstruct them from doing their job.

Besides Judy's inordinately heavy workload, another institutional issue in Judy's teaching situation deserves mention. The class in the exchange is a GATE class, a special sixth-grade experience for the "gifted and talented." Judy helped build this special program, and it is a main part of what keeps her going as a teacher, in spite of recent erosions in support and funding for the program. Taking a wider view, there are many powerful arguments against tracking of this sort, especially for the students who are not in GATE classes and who are routinely denied access to the expectations and academic program afforded this group. One cannot help but ask why sixth graders are not routinely provided the academic opportunities available to these students. Judy's group is diverse, with students bringing different kinds of gifts and talents; in this way, they are not really very different from most sixth graders. In the dramatic monologue, it is Christine, a student who does not "test gifted" but who has much to give who excels; had she been denied access to the class the entire group would have suffered. The large class size and overload on the teacher aside, part of what allows this class to function as well as it does is the rich diversity of the students coupled with their teacher's extraordinarily high expectations for them. More of our students could surely benefit from such challenges.

At this point in her career, Judy holds tightly to the value of the GATE program, including its tracking of students. She thinks her students do as well as they do, in large part, because they are together, and she cannot imagine how she could work with as large a group as she does if it were more heterogeneous than the one she now has. In part, Judy advocates the GATE program because of her long-term professional investment in building it and because, professionally, creating and working in a special program of this sort has been the only way for teachers in the United States to get any recognition for their accomplishments or release from the usual student load (although as Judy emphasizes most of these benefits have been taken away over the past few years). As Chapter 4 will show, if educational policy-makers begin to pay attention to the research on tracking and if they begin to remedy some of its damaging effects, they must couple these changes with the kinds of professional rewards these programs brought with them and ideally with professional rewards that are better integrated in the local school program.

These comments should not be taken as arguments against this particular GATE program. Indeed Judy's program is working beautifully and is meeting the needs of the students in it. Judy provides an enriched curriculum, as measured against any of the other classrooms in the exchange project in the United States and most in England. Rather it is an argument in favor of this kind of enriched curriculum for all. Those programs that are working for the students in them must receive adequate support until we understand how to sustain alternative school organizations and until we are confident that in actual practice we can make the new structures better than what we have.

The second research question explores characteristics of the classroom cultures in which students learn. Judy's classroom is always in a process of flux as she fine-tunes her curriculum to integrate the exchange activities. The fluctuations are slow and complex, with the exchange structure making many demands on her. Teachers entering into an exchange must: (a) design, with one's students, writing activities that would both interest the foreign peer audience and satisfy the instructional goals of the course; (b) collaborate and coordinate activities with another teacher, in this case one who is thousands of miles away; and (c) facilitate the students' reading of the writing from the other class and their responses to it. As we examine how Judy approaches the exchange, we see a number of constraints that she faces, some of them imposed from the outside and some self-imposed.

For her interdisciplinary program, Judy is a teacher with well-established and generally successful ways of teaching. Many of her activities have even taken on the aura of school traditions, with students from previous years coming in to look at the new name papers on the board and asking when the new group will be writing their women in history papers. Judy was understandably reluctant to abandon activities that for her were tried and true. Kate, meanwhile, felt that she had a great deal of flexibility in achieving her main goal of structuring projects that would demand different kinds of writing from her students. Since Kate's curriculum was so flexible, Judy took the lead in the collaboration and often provided ideas that Kate and her students took up—in particular, the name papers and the women in history papers, and even the spooky tales that found their way into the British magazines. The one activity Judy incorporated just for the exchange, the autobiography, proved the piece her students thought the British students would like best and according to reports from England was the piece they preferred. It is important to note that before Judy became involved in this exchange project, she had a number of ways of providing real audiences for her students' writing, within the school community with the spooky tales contest and within the wider community with the NOW essay contest. Across time, Judy and Kate are finding ways to work together and to use the exchange as a vehicle for stimulating their students' writing more and more.

This difference in flexibility in the curriculum seems to point to an important difference in the way English is taught in these two classrooms. Having not only participated in the exchange but also having spent a great deal of time talking to each other on their respective visits to England and to the United States, Judy and Kate have many important insights into their differences. After reading this analysis of the exchange, Kate pointed out that her philosophy of teaching English is fundamentally different from Judy's: "I'm trying to articulate the difference between progressive English teaching with what Judy does which is different." Kate explains that from her point of view Judy has a clear curriculum in which she knows exactly what she is doing whereas Kate explains that what her students do will vary depending on their needs as a group and as individuals. For Kate, curriculum development is part of a complex process of negotiation with her students: "I tend to work much more by a kind of negotiation" and this way of working is "more messy than what Judy does." By contrast, Judy, as teacher, makes decisions about the curriculum before she meets her students and then makes adjustments depending on the group. Judy relies on her past successes for making judgments about what a present group will do; for example, the women in history papers and spooky tales are traditions for her, with students coming in expecting to do those tasks. Traditions of particular tasks would be anathema to Kate. Rather she assumes that tasks will vary depending on the composition of the group, and she also assumes that any given task may not be appropriate for all students in the group. This is not to say that Kate negotiates every part of the curriculum or that Judy negotiates nothing; rather the difference is one of emphasis. As Kate is quick to point out, she would not want that kind of negotiation all the time. She overlays a negotiated curriculum onto both some structured pieces and onto some constants of English teaching (drafting for writing and discussions of literature) which would be much like anyone else's teaching.

The concept of negotiation, for Kate, goes deeper than curricular choice. Kate considers that for students to be able to choose writing tasks to which they are committed is essential to their development. As a progressive English teacher, Kate achieves this goal by gradually releasing control to the students, much as Vygotsky (1978) describes when he explains how learning occurs when learners receive help from more experienced others who then gradually release control to the learner. The control is released through this process of negotiation or through social interaction between teacher and learner and among learners, following Vygotsky's notion of social interaction that leads to learning. For example, with the magazines which are written relatively late in the year, Kate says the students "took them on board and discussed for themselves what they wanted to put in." Kate explains, "I wanted them to do school stuff" but "they wanted to do scary stories and traditional features of magazines." Through her negotiations with them and their negotiations with each other, they write on both her topic and their own. Although Judy might do some of this same sort of negotiation, she does not articulate it as one of her central or long-term goals for her students. The closest U.S. equivalents to what Kate describes can be found in the writing of teachers and researchers like Graves (1983), Calkins (1986), and Atwell (1987) who advocate an individualized workshop approach for elementary and middle school students who are encouraged to write on topics of their choosing. Kate's articulation of the British sense of negotiation differs in that teachers negotiate a release of control to the student and make sure each student experiences a variety of types of writing. The British vision also takes into account the long-term development of writers, given the relatively long amount of time a teacher can expect to work with the same class.

The issue of response to the writing from abroad is another important aspect of the classroom culture in both countries, and this issue proves complex as well. The possibility of response from peers in another country provides opportunities that differ substantially from opportunities presented by Judy's other activities involving external audiences. It is possible for students to receive response to their writing from distant peers, to give response to others, and to interact in writing about the topic of writing. Kate and Judy decided to support the response process by setting up response partnerships between pairs of students to ensure that all receive response. As the partnerships evolved a number of difficulties as well as advantages surfaced. First, it proved almost impossible for a teacher to ensure that every student would receive a letter from a partner on every occasion. With distances relatively great and the enrollment across classes different and changing slightly from month to month, some students were without partners. Also, students did not always complete their writing on time. The result was that some students, at certain times in the year, felt left out. Judy and Kate do an admirable job of trying to include all the students, and for the most part, with the help of the research team, they find out when students feel left out and correct the situation.

Another issue surrounding the partnerships surfaces in England. At the end of the year Kate asked her students to write responses to a set of questions about the exchange to evaluate the experience. Of the 17 British students who completed the questions, the overwhelming majority enjoyed their work during the year. Most of the British students remarked that their American partners enjoyed their work and said that they felt they had been heard. When asked who they think about as the reader or readers of their major pieces of writing for the exchange, six thought that they were writing to their partners only. The majority, eight students, considered their writing to be for the more general audience of the whole class (one wrote to Kate, and another made no comment about audience). Different British students, then, were affected differently by the partnership arrangement, with some left believing that they did their major exchange writing for individuals only. It seems that the partnerships diminished the sense of a more general readership for some students but not for others.

Nevertheless, these youngest of the students in the project developed a sense of closeness to their British audience. In spite of the complexities, Elizabeth, who ironically is the student who is left out of the response cycle at first, is articulate about the importance to her of the response she does receive from England:

> I think it helped a lot to know that someone was going to be reading my writing individually and just going to be focussing on it by themselves and thinking about it what they like and stuff. . . . It taught me what ways that people liked about things and what to write in my next story that I was going to write, those techniques and those ways of doing things, what I was going to help try and do more of in my next story that I was going to write. (Interview, March 24, 1988)

She says she found out "what kind of stories people like to read."

The students on both sides of the Atlantic respond in varied ways—most often sharing personal experiences, extending experiences brought up in the writing from abroad, and evaluating, usually generally and positively, the writing they receive. In the one case when the response became dialogic, Judy's students also clarified points in their writing and reiterated ideas that they thought had been misunderstood. Throughout this process of giving and receiving response, the students began to understand more about the world abroad and their foreign audience, and they began to reflect on their own experiences and understand themselves better. In essence, the response process and the close personal connections that developed helped them exercise their critical imaginations.

The next part of the second research question concerns adolescent writing development and the cultural practices that support that development. Judy's students shed light most particularly on how sixth graders, with varied needs, develop essay writing skills. First of all, her students place the essay in the general category of non-fiction school writing, with the book report being the staple of that category in the early school years. At first, when her students are asked to read and then use that reading when they write, most assume that they are writing what they think of as a book report. They come into the class thinking that book reports consist of the regurgitation of facts already written by others. The essay, so defined, serves no purpose other than to test their knowledge or their reading comprehension. The students see no reason to write essays of this sort, especially for the exchange where their readers are real kids whom they project would have similar opinions about this kind of writing. They say that they much prefer writing stories and personal pieces about themselves, where they can express their own ideas and use their imaginations, and they are confident that their British readers will prefer this kind of writing as well. They feel embarrassed about sending school-writing that has no purpose beyond a display for the teacher. The only exception is Belle, who remains uncritically enthusiastic. At the other end of the continuum, with her award winning NOW essay, is Elizabeth, who shows a more differentiated understanding of the essay and presents a model of how one can make such writing issue-focused and personally meaningful. Similarly, Christine, with her Rosa Parks monologue, makes history come alive. The exchange heightens the students' sensitivity to the difference between real and meaningful writing and school-writing for a teacher only; they learn to make some school tasks personally important rather than to construe them as tests. They learn to broaden their definitions of non-fiction school writing, in large part by following the positive examples of peers in their own class. They show the beginnings of using their critical imaginations, something Judy promotes.

The way Judy meshes her student's social needs with their academic needs provides important classroom support these developing writers. In the first place, Judy structures a series of important tasks for her students. She fulfills their social needs by helping them question their identities and their cultural surroundings. In the process they become engaged in and committed to their writing. With the name paper it becomes clear from the start of the year that one's identity is not a given in this classroom, that it is a subject of reflection. In the autobiography, Judy's students write about many aspects of themselves and these mini-reflections that make up the autobiography ask the student to think about their pasts and consider their futures in ways uncommon for sixth graders. Through the ongoing sharing and response with the students in England the reflection deepens. By spring the tasks become less personal and increasingly complex—from the women in history contest, to the dramatic monologues, to the monologues about Greek gods and goddesses. In this series of assignments, Judy asks her students now to assume new roles, to imagine themselves in another's place and to think critically about the consequences of one's identity. With critical imagination Judy's students reflect on and imagine other possibilities for themselves and the world at large. In these assignments, Judy also provides a series of opportunities which allow students to practice what they are learning. Beyond the process of working through successive drafts on an individual piece, these students work through successive drafts on several similar pieces. As part of the tasks, Judy skillfully integrates oral and written language, including drama. Students, like Christine, who have dramatic skills have an opportunity to bring their talents to bear as they learn to address complex academic topics in personally meaningful ways. Furthermore, the whole group has easier and more immediate access to their peers' oral productions than they do to the written texts. Thus, the oral and dramatic component stimulates the students' learning from one another. Similarly, the student performers have an important and immediate audience, and they have the opportunity to hear and experience the effects of their own work and the work of all the other students in the class. Because all the activities require that students make use of source texts, students also are working on integrating their reading and their writing. Finally, as students prepare formal oral presentations for their peers, written text takes on a new meaning, in service of the final oral production.

Judy's class exemplifies the concept of the classroom culture referred to in Chapter 1—where the students contribute to remaking and redefining their culture rather than just having it handed on to them. Both Judy and Kate and their students come to share responsibility for designing the activities and deciding how they will be carried out. Whereas early in the year many of the students assume that Judy, like most teachers, is telling them what to write when she intends to help them select topics, by the end of the year, they perceive that they participate fully in the decision-making process. In her own way, Judy is moving toward a negotiated curriculum. Just as the collaboration between Kate and Judy grows naturally across time, so does the collaboration between Judy and her students.

As for the exchange, it certainly broadens the audiences available to Judy's young writers; it provides a responsive peer audience that students have the opportunity to interact with; and it provides friends and social currency, especially important for a student like Belle who has difficulty making friends in her own class. At times the exchange adds motivation for writing.

The exchange also provides something else—a growing sense of another culture and a powerful stimulus for the kind of critical thought the group is engaged in. Daniel, one of Kate's students, says in his final evaluation of the exchanges, "I thought people in America would live in either a drug world or a posh world but my thoughts and views have changed towards America." Elizabeth finds more similarity than she expected: "Ms. Logan and Ms. Chapman are the same, and all the kids are the same, and everything's the same" (Interview, June 13, 1988). Like Belle who reports playfully calling her mother "mum" for fun, Elizabeth and her friends, using the model of the British writing, play pretend games in which they are British:

> Yesterday we were out, and we were pretending that . . . we were from England, me and some of my friends. And we were saying "mum," and "I fancy that," and we were talking (UC), and then Kitty was my child, and she said, mommy, and I said no, you have to call her mum. (Interview, June 13, 1988)

As Farah in England sums it up: "Youre getting to know things about another country."

CHAPTER 4—ROBIN DAVIS AND JOHN HICKMAN

General Background

The Teachers, Their Schools, and Their Classes

The Teachers

Robin Davis. After teaching for three years in the Los Angeles city schools, Robin Davis moved to Albany Middle School, where she has taught for 17 years. Robin has been seventh-grade chairperson at Albany for the last 15 years. With a B.S. degree from the University of Southern California's School of Education as a history major and English minor, Robin currently teaches pre-algebra, science, social studies, and two classes of English, one seventh and one eighth grade. Her schedule demands that she teach five periods a day, with each period a different preparation, and with four of the five preparations for classes in different disciplines. In addition to her hefty regular teaching commitments, some not even in the disciplines she studied for her degree, she teaches aerobics classes two nights a week, regularly presents workshops as part of the Bay Area Writing Project, serves on several district-level curriculum committees, and is active in the new "State of the Art Middle School Program," a California project that selected Albany as one of 100 participating schools. Albany Middle School is also part of the School University Partnership for Educational Renewal (SUPER) program with U.C. Berkeley's School of Education, and Robin was selected as the SUPER liaison for all the teachers in the Albany School District. As liaison, along with staff from Berkeley, she planned and helped organize Saturday workshops for teachers, called SUPER Saturdays; led meetings; and worked on a writing evaluation project in her district which culminated in a publication of student writing called the District Writing Book. Every spring Robin takes her students camping at Yosemite and with her fellow teachers produces the annual school musical (written each year by one of her colleagues).

During the busy parts of the school year, especially in the spring, Robin had difficulty finding time to talk with members of the research team for more than a few minutes. Robin manages all her activities by filling many "spare moments" with work; frequently in her supposedly "free" time, we found her reading student papers and recording grades in her grade book. Robin is busy and committed; some, including Robin, might even say overcommitted.

John Hickman. In England John Hickman, like Robin Davis, has spent his entire 18-year career at the same school. Born and raised only a few miles from his school, Forest Gate, he attended the College of Saint Mark and Saint John in London, a well-known institution which has since moved to Plymouth. His four-year college course led to a B.A. and teaching credentials in three curriculum subjects, one of which was English. Upon completing his B.A., John was appointed to Forest Gate's English Department, then five years later to the post of English Department Head, a position reserved for outstanding faculty members who are effective teacher-leaders. In this post, John supervises seven other English teachers and is in charge of overseeing and supporting student teachers in English from the Institute of Education and from other London colleges. Four years after becoming department head (during the 1979-80 academic year), John was seconded[1] full-time to take the Diploma in the Role of Language in Education at the University of London, Institute of Education. After receiving his Diploma, John added to his duties as

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[1] There is no equivalent word in American English to "seconded," likely because there is no equivalent concept. In England when teachers are seconded, they are released from their regular duties and receive their full salary to obtain training or experience that will help them perform their job better or that will qualify them for higher-level posts.

Department Head the post of Senior Teacher.[2] As Senior Teacher, John carries a number of school-wide curricular responsibilities, including supervising the work of all newly qualified teachers—not just those in English—and the coordination of in-service training for all Forest Gate teachers.

Besides his administrative duties, John produces plays at the school and teaches five classes of English a week, each to a different age level, the equivalents of grades eight, nine, ten, eleven, and twelve in the United States. Besides the Form three or eighth-grade equivalent group in the exchange, John has a Form four GCSE class (that had exchanged writing in the previous year with Helen Ying's class); a Form five GCSE class; a lower sixth form class that was not taking A levels but that was taking the one-year Certificate of Pre Vocational Education; and an upper-sixth form, A level literature class. Each of these classes meets for two or three 65-minute periods each week, and John has two scheduled periods during the week when he is "on call" to support other teachers who are having difficulty with their classes. Sometimes he is also asked to cover classes for teachers who are absent. Once a week John voluntarily runs an extra class before school for his A level literature group.

In addition to his work at Forest Gate, John has recently published a book on curriculum and change in Great Britain with Keith Kimberley, *Teachers, Language and Learning* (1988). He has played important roles in the London Association for Teachers of English for the past decade, serving on the executive committee, which determines policy and plans and organizes conferences and other events, and as treasurer for the organization. Well-known for his thoughtful and innovative ideas, John clearly states his commitment to the teaching and learning of English in an interview conducted by one of his students and sent to Robin's class as part of a book about Forest Gate School:

> English is probably the most important subject because English is the subject where people deal with their own lives, their own feelings, the world that they live in. It's where people can read what other people have got to say about the world, and hope that has some sort of effect on the way we think, and the way we feel. It also gives me a lot more freedom than other subjects, I'm not tied to a lot of knowledge that I have to get across.

Robin joined the exchange project midway through the first year (1986-87), when she valiantly picked up the pieces for another U.S. teacher whose teaching schedule made it impossible to work out the logistics of his exchange with British teacher Jean Dunning.[3] During the first year Robin's class composed and sent a number of projects very quickly and made Jean's students, who were working extremely hard, feel that someone in the U.S. was listening and caring about their efforts. When Jean decided to work intensely on her Ph.D. thesis during the 1987-88 academic year and felt she could not continue with the exchange, John Hickman, whose U.S. partner, Helen Ying, was taking a maternity leave, was a natural choice to pair with Robin.

John had been given a study leave from his school for two weeks in late June and early July of 1987 to come to the United States to participate in the Bay Area Writing Project's summer invitational program and to work with the research team on the exchange project. At that time, he and Robin met face-to-face and were able to make initial plans for their 1987-1988 exchange.

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[2] "Senior Teacher" is a school-level appointment for which there is no equivalent in the United States. In England Senior Teachers are directly under the Deputy Head, who is much like an Assistant Principal in the United States, and directly over the Department Head.

[3] The other teacher in the United States changed students every nine weeks as part of an elective block program; originally he thought he could work with a consistent group of students who would meet outside class, but this proved impossible.

Their Schools

Albany Middle School. Like Everett where Judy Logan teaches, Albany Middle School houses grades six through eight. It was built in the early 1970s and is just north of Berkeley. According to Robin, Albany has been "traditionally kind of a blue collar community," but one that is "slowly changing" into a more middle-class area as nearby housing prices escalate. As Table 2.2 shows, the school population of 586 students is 20% Asian American, 12% African American, 5% Chicano/Latino, and 63% other White.

The school grounds are bordered by a major highway that runs parallel to the west end of campus, and a busy thoroughfare on its north side that leads to a small downtown area to the east. On the large grassy campus, tennis courts, basketball courts, and a baseball diamond lie between the school buildings and the highway. Four-square and hopscotch diagrams are neatly painted onto the pavement next to the playing field. The large size of the grounds and playing fields dwarf the school plant which consists of a set of brown, one-story, well-kept buildings, connected by covered walkways, all on one level. The buildings include classrooms; a library; a multi-purpose room; an amphitheatre; a life arts center for physical science, art, woodshop, and mechanical drawing classes; locker rooms for physical education; and teachers' offices arranged by grade level or subject area, with four teachers in each office.

Robin's room is one of a connected cluster of three small classrooms separated only by partitions. Students can see into the other classes through large glass windows in the walls above a sink and counter at the rear of the room (see Figure 4.1). One side and the front of the room are brown brick while orange cabinets run from ceiling to floor on the fourth side of the room. The ceiling is vaulted, with two high windows that offer no visibility to the outside and provide little illumination. Robin and her class depend on fluorescent fixtures to light the room; they bring with them a constant hum. The students' desks move easily and frequently are rearranged, depending on the activity of the day. The bulletin boards are filled with student writing, including work received from John's class as part of the the exchange. One brick wall shows Robin's vibrant personality especially well. It is covered with a picture of a giant pickle and with art, cartoons, and photographs of pickles; the "pickle art," to which students constantly contribute, started because, when students get rowdy in class, Robin often says, "Relax and have a pickle." On a more serious theme, an Ansel Adams poster of Yosemite, signed by Adams himself and procured by a parent in a previous year, hangs on one wall. This photograph provides a constant reminder of the yearly spring trip Robin's students take to Yosemite.

Unlike Everett Middle School, Albany is in a district that is philosophically opposed to ability group tracking at the elementary and middle school levels.[4] Therefore, during the exchange year all classes at Albany, except math, were mixed ability; beginning in the 1988-89 school year math classes were untracked too. During the exchange year the district allowed parents to request teachers. At that time, to prevent "de facto" ability grouping, the district only allowed fifteen parental requests for a given teacher. Nevertheless, middle-class parents made the largest number of requests, and Robin's slots filled quickly, resulting in at least half of her students coming from middle-class homes. After as many parent requests as possible had been honored, the counselors and teachers tried to balance the classes with students of mixed backgrounds and abilities. Beginning in 1990-1991 the district stopped allowing parental requests. Like Judy Logan, Robin met with her seventh graders three hours a day, five days a week; during that time she was responsible for teaching English, social studies, and science.

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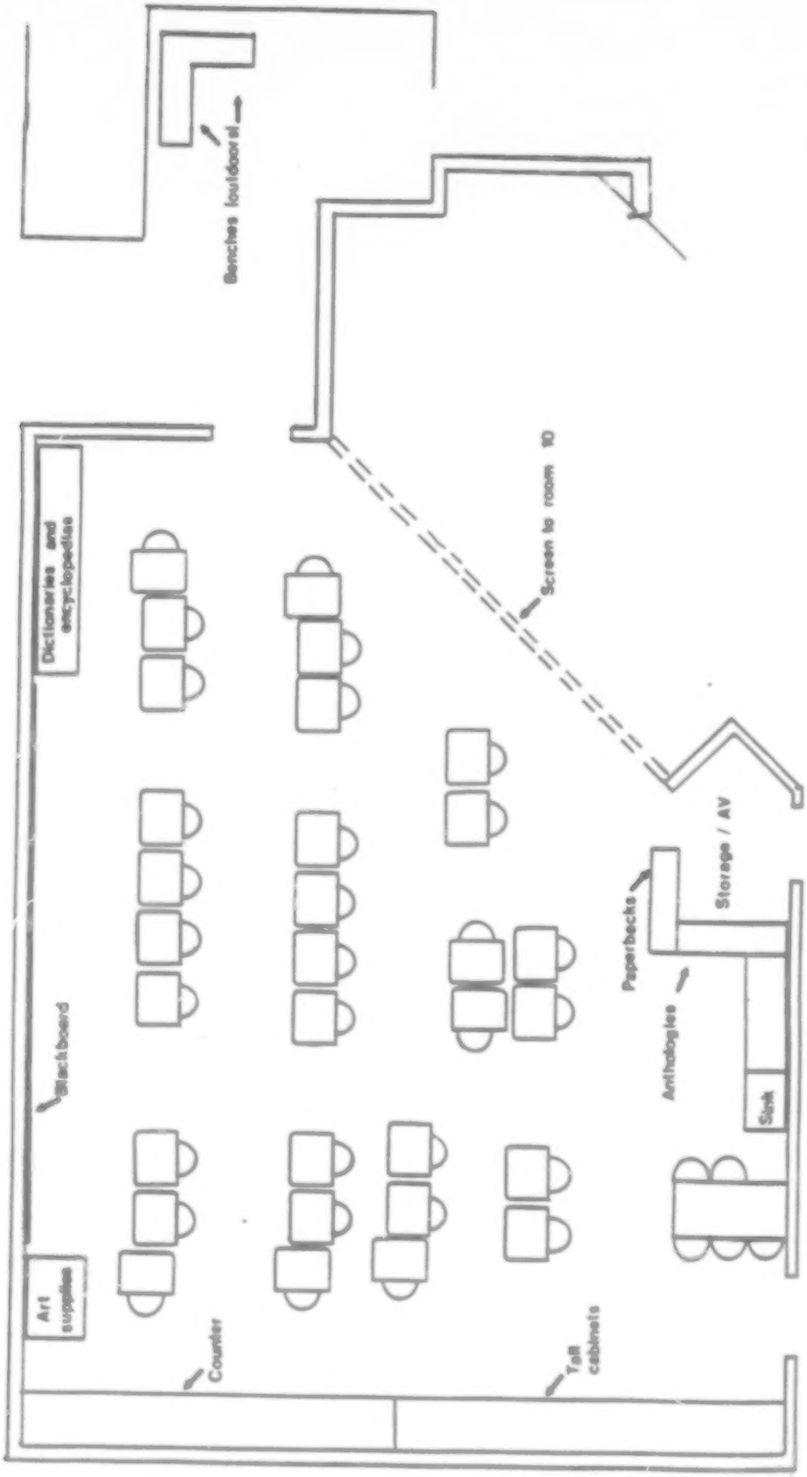
[4] All of the U.S. school districts participating in this project track students at the high school levels.

Figure 4.1: Robin Davis' Classroom


Benches (outdoors)
Dictionaries and encyclopedias
Screen to room 10
Storage / AV
Paperbacks
Anthologies
Sink
Blackboard
Art supplies
Counter
Tall cabinets

Note: This figure was prepared for another study.

Forest Gate Community School. Forest Gate is located in a working class residential and commercial neighborhood in the eastern London Borough of Newham. The nearby dwellings, in which many of John's students live, are mostly small row houses built 80 to 100 years ago, nearly all of them modified and modernized in the past two decades. Most are owned by the occupants, some by Newham Borough Council,[5] and a few by private landlords. There are also some 1960s vintage "tower blocks" (apartment buildings of more than 20 floors) that are owned by Newham Borough Council and that are generally unpopular with their tenants.

Newham Borough is industrial as well as residential and is laced with major highways to the eastern counties and with railways and railway yards. There are small factories and industrial enterprises near the railways and main roads. The borough's southern boundary is the river Thames. Newham includes an area which was once a major part of the port of London and had large factories, electric power stations, and coal and gas manufacturing plants nearby. Nearly all these enterprises, including the docks, are now semi-derelict; the port of London is at Tilbury, thirty miles down the river. The dock area is being redeveloped for housing, leisure activities, shopping malls, commercial office buildings in the American style, and an airport for executive jets and short-haul commercial flights.

Built in the late 1960s of red brick, Forest Gate School is conspicuous for its newness in relation to the surrounding row houses and commercial buildings. The school is on a relatively small site beside the busy main line railway and not far from two major roads. Ringed by high cyclone fences, the Forest Gate grounds are mostly concrete, with very little grass. The school has an asphalt playground with lines marked for tennis, netball (a game similar to basketball), and rounders (a game similar to baseball). A second playground, called a "dry play," is used mainly for cricket and football (soccer). There is a small grassy area at the back of the main building. The playgrounds are nowhere near as large as those at Albany; after seeing the pictures of Robin's school, Charlie, one of John's students, wrote to the U.S. class, "Your school looks alot more Bigger then our school." Still, Forest Gate students have a certain pride in their school in spite of the obvious limitations of the grounds.

The main Forest Gate building is three stories. It is built around an interior courtyard, with one inside wall covered by a huge and colorful jungle mural painted by the students. Having seen pictures of Forest Gate in one of the exchange packages, Quirk, one of Robin's students, notes that from his vantage point it:

> seemed like they were more into arts and crafts than we are here, which I wish we were, cause I am really interested in that stuff. . . . They had huge things on the walls or all over the place, or things that people had done like murals and stuff and lots of art classes and stuff from what I saw. (Interview, March 29, 1988)

A special annex, separate from the main building, contains the modern language department, the Sixth Form classrooms, and the Sixth Form student lounge.[6] John's office is in this annex.

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[5] Council housing in England was built by local councils (boroughs) with government subsidies. Rents are paid to the Council and are much lower than private rents. Tenants must prove financial need to receive a Council house, that is they must be unable to afford to buy a house or pay a private rent and must live in substandard housing. In inner-city boroughs like Newham up to 50% of families may be living in council apartments or houses. Although low-income families often have priority, tenancies are not allocated only to the needy; other criteria include years of residence in the borough, size of family, and the need to re-house people living in sub-standard accommodations.

[6] In British schools pupils in the Sixth Forms, the last two years of secondary school, generally have special privileges which may include some separate facilities and a lounge, called the "sixth form common room." There may be specially designated study areas, as well as a library, because it is quite usual for the sixth form students to have individualized timetables, with the possibility of several "study periods" during which they work unsupervised on assignments set by their teachers.

Portable classrooms outside the main building house the social education and religious studies classes.

Forest Gate has the special status of being a "community school." In England, the idea of the community school came about in the 1970s when a number of Local Education Authorities and some of their schools set out to make strong links between those schools and the public they serve. The Newham borough took on the idea in the 1980s. A community school receives extra funding to extend its activities and the services it offers. It also strives to be open to the community—parents and others. There are signs to welcome visitors in several languages. Forest Gate has forged community links, first of all, by setting aside two community rooms in the school building where there are classes during the day for members of the community. In addition, regular classes for the GCSE and for A levels are open to community members. In the evenings the entire school is open to the community. Forest Gate also houses a nursery where parents may bring their pre-school age children when they attend class or when they need childcare for personal purposes. The nursery is supported by community funding and is free for parents. Forest Gate also strives to build its regular curriculum around community needs, but John feels that this aspect of Forest Gate's efforts have been only partially achieved.

John's classroom, which is on the ground floor in the main building, is painted orange. It has built-in storage cabinets and natural light. Student writing from all John's classes is displayed on bulletin boards alongside the writing and photographs received from Robin's class. As Figure 4.2 shows, in the class students sit in clusters around tables rather than at individual desks. This room arrangement is meant to promote student talk and allow for easy and natural group work.

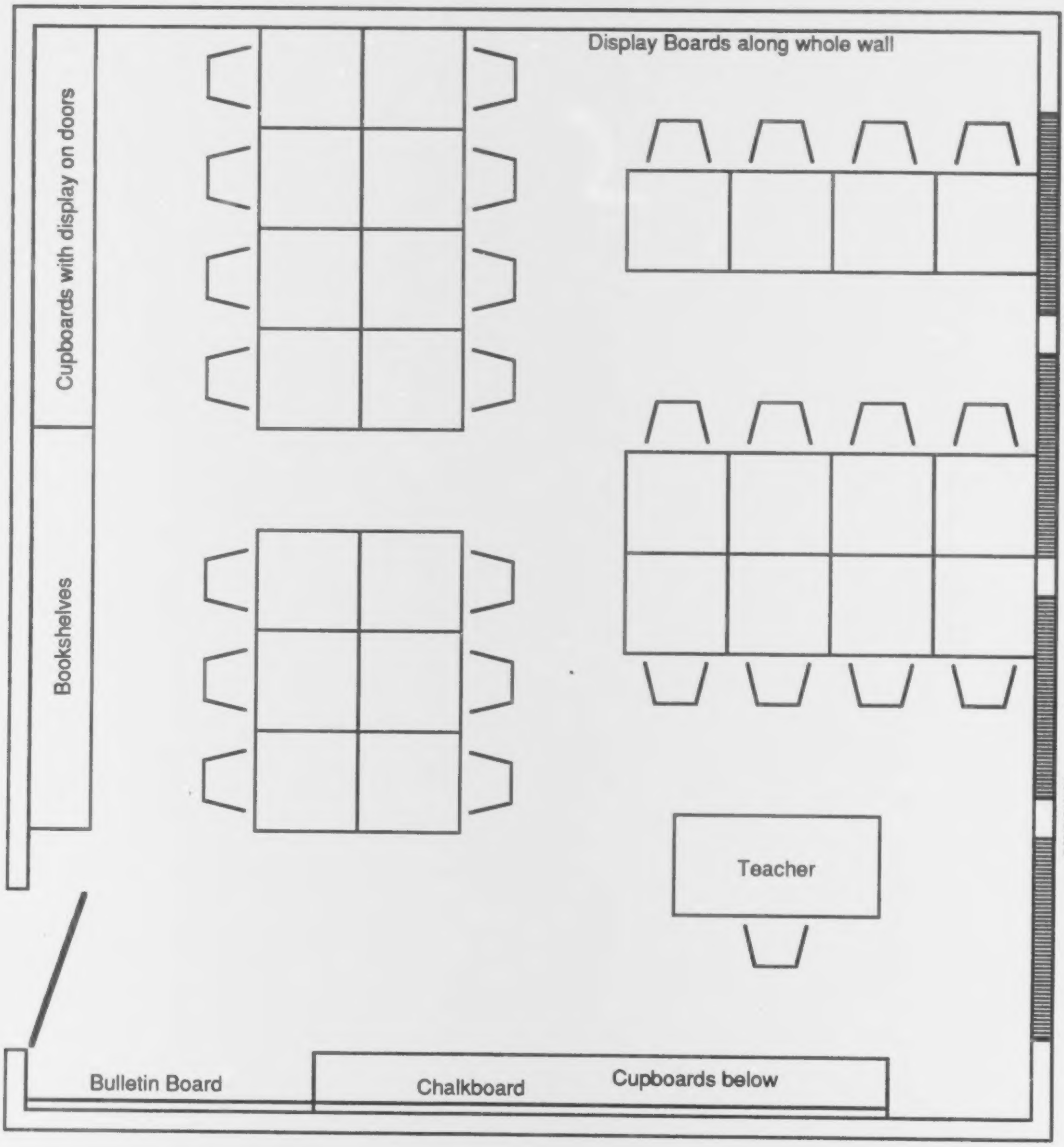
While Albany has students in grades six through eight, Forest Gate, like the other British secondary schools in the study, includes forms one through six (U.S. grades six through twelve). Forest Gate is about a third larger than Albany, with a school population of approximately 900. According to Table 2.2 Forest Gate has a larger proportion of students from minority groups than Albany, about 60% as opposed to Albany's slightly less than 40%. John's exchange class meets in a block schedule, for the whole of Tuesday mornings, two and a half hours, and for an hour and ten minutes on Thursday afternoons.

Their Classes

As Table 2.2 shows, of Robin's 30 seventh-grade students, 22 or 73% are Anglo, 10% more than the school population of 63%. Her other eight students, or 27%, include Hispanics (three students or 10% of the whole group), Asians (two students or 7%), and African Americans (three students or 10%). One of the Hispanic students is a native Spanish speaker, with Spanish spoken in the home, while another speaks Spanish but English is the home language. The rest of Robin's students, including the third student with a Spanish surname, are monolingual native speakers of English. In her last interview with the research team, Robin reveals that she has the reputation of being able to handle immature seventh-grade boys, and so she often gets a high percentage of male students. She says the seventh-grade exchange class is one of the most balanced she has had, with 17 boys and 13 girls.

While Robin's group remains stable across the year, John begins the year with 29 students and ends with 26. Across the year's time six students leave while three join the group. Most of these are from East Asian immigrant groups. At the end of the year, 11 of John's 26 students are Anglo (42%), and 12 (46%) are bilingual students from South Asian countries, mainly India and Bangladesh. There are two black students, one from a bilingual Nigerian family, and the other African-Caribbean, and one student from a Greek family. The bilingual students span the range from recent arrivals in England with limited proficiency in English to those who were born in England, have grown up with two languages, and are fully literate in English. The class starts the year with 19 boys and ten girls and ends with a similar ratio. The gender imbalance in John's class

Figure 4.2: John Hickman's Classroom


Display Boards along whole wall
Cupboards with display on doors
Bookshelves
Windows
Windows
Teacher
Bulletin Board
Chalkboard
Cupboards below

is probably related to the fact that many South Asian families, who live nearby, prefer to send their daughters to the two all-girls' schools in the neighborhood.[7]

Comparing Institutional Contexts

As with Judy and Kate's case, a synthesis of the background data for these two exchange classes provides preliminary information for addressing the first research question about the institutional supports and constraints on the teaching and learning of writing in the United States and the United Kingdom. The salient differences in the greater instructional contexts will be discussed in this section and will be paralleled to the discussion for Kate and Judy in Chapter 3. The main differences include the following: (a) like Kate and Judy, Robin and John are active professionally and take on added professional roles, with Robin's roles less well-integrated in the daily life of her school than John's; (b) both Robin and John assume external duties that have no equivalent in the other's country; (c) the different teaching schedules and school organizations support the teachers in different ways as they get to know their students as individuals; and (d) although both schools promote mixed ability teaching, the concept is still being implemented in Robin's school while it is established in John's English department.

Teachers' Professional Roles: Separated or Integrated

Like Kate's, many of John's professional activities are integral to the workings of his school. His administrative responsibilities carry with them serious academic commitments, from supervising student teachers in English to coordinating in-service education and probationary teachers for all subject areas. As part of his regular job, John is paid to perform these duties which are essential to the structure of his school. In England John's roles earn him a promotion reserved for outstanding teachers who do not stop teaching but rather take a reduced load to play a significant leadership role with their peers. Looking from the least experienced British teacher, Kate Chapman, to one of the most experienced, John Hickman, one can see a trajectory in the British teaching profession that leads to roles with increased responsibility and recognition, both within and outside the school context. Like Kate, John is active in LATE, an endeavor that is helpful to members of his English department. John also takes on a professional responsibility that takes him beyond his school's bounds and for which he receives no formal recognition of compensation at his school. He publishes on issues having to do with national educational policy. This role gives him access to a wider range of audiences than is provided by the school or the local education authority.

Robin, like Judy, is active professionally but often in ways that give her more professional recognition outside her school than within it. Robin's activities are mostly at the state and local levels. Her local work with the Bay Area Writing Project (BAWP) is greatly appreciated by the larger professional community but often takes her away from her classroom responsibilities when she is giving workshops at distant school sites. Robin receives extra pay for conducting BAWP workshops, a supplement to her income and to her teaching job. Likewise, the statewide committees on which she serves are related to but still distant from the daily local needs of the teachers Robin works with. By contrast, Robin's involvement with the SUPER program is better integrated with her school's needs since it directly involves the teachers in her district, but this program is temporary and experimental. As seventh-grade chair, Robin has some administrative duties that directly affect her school, but these responsibilities are not equivalent to the kind of school-based professional opportunities available to British teachers like John.

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[7] In England there has long been a system of parental choice in the state-supported schools. The choices include single or mixed gender schools, schools with and without religious affiliations, and schools in or outside one's neighborhood.

New Professional Roles

Most of John's school-based professional roles do not exist for teachers in the United States. Whereas John is responsible for all the student teachers who work in his department, generally no one at a U.S. school site is responsible for a group of student teachers. Often if there are student teachers in a U.S. school, the supervising teacher is the only teacher considered responsible for the new teacher's education. Also, student teachers are not always clustered at a given school. Whereas John is responsible for in-service programs for the entire teaching staff at Forest Gate, across the curriculum, teachers in U.S. schools do not assume this kind of responsibility. In reflecting on this issue, Robin notes that as seventh-grade chair she determines some of the in-service programs for her department, but she does not determine them all. Either the school principal who sometimes consults with teachers or district-level administrators determine the whole-school programs. She also gives an example from a neighboring school district:

> They had a release day, what we call a release day or teacher work day, on Monday and I believe they had some choices on what they wanted to do. But at the beginning of the year they had four days, they had no choice at all, they had to be there and this was the agenda. And I know there was . . . lots of kicking and screaming. They could have done it in two days. They could have given us time in our classrooms. They could have given us time to look at materials. You could go on and on. (Interview, November 28, 1990)

If teachers had more say in planning their own in-service education, it might be more successful. On another issue, in U.S. schools no one is designated to take charge of first-year teachers within a department, or as John does, within the school as a whole (also see discussion in Chapter 3).

Likewise, Robin's professional activities have little parallel in England. Teachers in England collaborate with universities over issues having to do with training new teachers, and in the planning and execution of professional activities for teachers, but not in a school-university partnership of the sort SUPER seeks to promote. The United Kingdom is not divided into states that control educational policy; thus, the only opportunities for teachers to become involved in policy arenas are through national committees, most usually those related to the examinations, and through work with local education authorities. Interestingly, such national work generally goes to leaders in professional organizations such as LATE or NATE. Even though a British National Writing Project was funded during the time of the exchange study, it followed a model very different than the National Writing Project in the States. The British model was closely integrated with the work at school sites. Involved teachers like Robin did not give in-service workshops to other teachers outside their school; but instead, in collaboration with leaders in the British National Writing Project, functioned as part of a team of teachers at their schools working to investigate local problems and then to write about what they found for a broader audience of educators.

In reflecting on the lack of integration and recognition of professional activities at the school site, Robin says:

> I wish something like that would begin to happen. You know we've talked about this before. Because in this country there's no place for a teacher to go except for out of the classroom and into administration so you have a dichotomy, you don't have a union of, of you don't validate good teaching in this country. The bottom line is if you do a good job in the classroom so what. . . . They can kick and scream about why they don't have teachers in this country, they're running out of teachers.. Who in their right mind is going to go and stay in the classroom and never be acknowledged for your ability to teach. It's very rare, I mean you have to get out, you have to either write, you have to . . . (Interview, November 28, 1990)

Getting to Know Students: School and Curricular Organization

In the United States, Robin like Judy teaches in a small middle school that is designed to ease students' transitions from the elementary school, where the same teacher has the same group all day, to the generally larger secondary school, where students normally change teachers and are in class with a new group of students every hour and where the some classes change at the semester but all change at the end of each year (see Freedman & McLeod, 1988b, for national survey results). In this middle school organization, Robin's seventh graders stay with her for the entire morning. Unlike Judy, Robin does not have the school-within-a-school provided by the GATE program. Thus, she only has one year to get to know her students; like most teachers, she cannot reduce her load by teaching half time but working full time as Judy Logan does.

Just as Kate has fewer hours per week with her exchange class than Judy does, John has his group for fewer hours than Robin has hers. Like Kate's school, John's large comprehensive secondary school is divided into smaller units called year and tutor groups. The year group meets once a week for 25 minutes. Within a year there are five tutor groups. John's students take most of their classes with their tutor groups for their first three years and stay in the same groups across five years. They have the same "form tutor" or teacher who looks after their tutor group for all five years. Also serving to personalize education is Forest Gate's status as a community school. As families from diverse backgrounds gather routinely at the school site for many activities, the school promotes a close and family-like atmosphere for the students.

John has a flexible schedule with his exchange class; although he only meets them twice a week, unlike Kate, he has them for long stretches so that he can involve them in concentrated work. As the 1988 survey shows is the case for most British teachers, John has his group for three years and looks forward to teaching them for another two years to come.

Heterogeneous Learning Communities: Institutionalizing the Concept

Like Kate's school, John's school has a long tradition of mixed ability teaching. This organization is taken for granted and is considered neither remarkable nor a subject of debate. The shift to mixed ability teaching in England has brought with it a major reorganization of the classroom that allows teachers to meet the needs of varied students at once. In particular, in English classes, instruction usually takes place in a workshop atmosphere, in which students do much of their writing in class and receive help from their teacher and their peers as they need it. Teachers rarely talk for long before the whole class. Such talk is common at the start and end of the lesson, as a framing device. Mostly, classrooms are filled with student talk as students work together at small table groups that remain stable for the students across the year if not longer. Along the way some students are assigned extra reading or writing on the side if they complete work ahead of their peers, while others have extra time to do the best job they can. Many educators in England feel that this radical shift in classroom organization has reformed teaching and learning at least as much as, if not more than, the change in ability grouping itself.

Robin's school is forward-looking and somewhat unusual in the United States with its strong philosophy of mixed ability teaching. However, community support is not unanimous, and the school makes some compromises as it bows to strong pressures, mostly from the surrounding middle-class community, to place their children in the classes of particular teachers. In structuring schools for mixed ability teaching, Robin and her fellow teachers are pioneers who feel their own way, quite unlike the British teachers who over the years have worked work out classroom organizations designed especially to accommodate students of varied abilities. Whereas in the British classrooms in this study students frequently worked collaboratively on projects and at varied paces, often on different kinds of tasks from one another, in Robin's classroom, students are expected to do similar and often identical work and follow identical time schedules. How to structure a mixed ability class so that all students benefit maximally from the experience is something that teachers in the United States are just beginning to grapple with.

The U.S. Focal Students

Four focal students serve as representatives for Robin's class: two males, Quirk and Billy, and two females, Bambi and Elise. All four are Anglo and middle-class, not surprising since Robin's class contains few non-Anglo students and only two students whose family incomes are low enough for them to qualify for the federally subsidized school lunch program for students from low-income homes.[8]

Quirk

Quirk is an only child whose father is a lawyer and mother is a science teacher. Quirk writes in his autobiography that the summer before the exchange year he travelled with his parents to Greece, England, and Paris and that he hopes to visit England. He looks forward to a cross cultural exchange as he writes to the British group:

> Hopefully, I will make some friends in your class and when I come to England I can maybe meet you. (Autobiography)

Robin characterizes Quirk as a strong writer and a fine artist:

> Quirk is a very interesting child. He's mature. And uh excellent writer, just an outstanding writer. He has really done some nice writing for the exchange, and . . . finds in the exchange a real vehicle for his humor in his drawings and his writing. He's really enjoying it. (Interview, March 9, 1988)

The exchange provides Quirk with an opportunity to integrate his art with his writing, something he has had little other opportunity to do in sanctioned school activities. In his autobiography, Quirk reveals that his art, which he calls "doddling," fills his spare time:

> I'd just sit around and doddle. It's the same on weekends except there's no school and I fill up the time with more doddling and seeing friends.

Quirk's school notebooks are covered with his sketches, many of which he completes during class discussions.

Billy

Billy is quiet in class, interacting only minimally with the other students. Robin notes that Billy remained "very quiet" and that she "could count on one hand the amount of times he really spoke out and contributed in class." Robin notes that Billy only does the minimum amount of work:

> When he really wants to, he can certainly push himself and do a lot. He's certainly involved in the exchange but hasn't really produced a whole lot more than he does . . . for any other situation. He's real task oriented. . . . He'll do it, and that's, and it's always done, and it's done well, but not anything with a real personal touch to it. (Interview, March 9, 1988)

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[8] When Robin joined the study, we thought her class would contain a greater cross section of students than it did.

Billy lives with his father who is a photography teacher at a local high school and his mother, a doctoral student at U.C. Berkeley. He has two older siblings, a 22-year-old brother who is a student at U.C. Berkeley and a 24-year-old sister. An avid skier and someone more interested in science than English, Billy never becomes fully involved in his English class.

Bambi

Bambi enjoys parties and going out with friends. She claims that one of her main interests is talking on the phone. In her journal she writes, "My hobbies are partys and friends." In her autobiography, Bambi describes her home-life:

> My parents are divorced and I live with my mom and sister. We pretty mutch get along except for when one person is in a bad mood. . . . Our family stays out of each others way. My sister and I are friends and have a lot in common. We have a family night once a week. This is where we talk about what's new in our lives. My family loves each other very much. My family goes camping three times a year. We go to Great America once a year. I go to my dad's house every other weekend.

Bambi later writes that she loves her sister and says she is "almost positive that she loves me."

Bambi is someone Robin sees as an "at-risk kind of student" who "enjoyed writing and probably got the most out of the exchange." In particular, Robin notes, "Toward the end of the year, she was getting very very good at giving response to kids in their writing" (Interview, July 26, 1988). Robin summarizes her impressions:

> Bambi has just taken off with the writing exchange. Uh she is not real good with her study habits, but the one thing she has kept up on is this writing. And she has really produced some excellent pieces that she has shared with the class. (Interview, March 9, 1988)

Elise

Elise, like Bambi, is very social and, again like Bambi, one of her favorite activities is talking on the phone. Elise's parents also are divorced, and she too lives with her mother. Elise sees her father, stepmother, and 18-year-old stepbrother on weekends. In her autobiography Elise reports that she walks to school everyday with her best friend and then "hangs out with friends until class starts"; during lunch she likes to "walk around and talk to friends."

Academically, Elise does better than Bambi. According to Robin, Elise enjoys her participation in the exchange:

> Elise is a very bright, very motivated student . . . . into the whole exchange. She has done a real good job with it. (Interview, March 9, 1988)

The Exchange

Parallel to the previous chapter, to address the two research questions from inside the classroom, we next follow Robin's and John's classes across time, looking particularly at the experiences of Robin's four focal students. The first question concerns how institutional constraints and supports (previewed in the background section and further elaborated here) affect the teaching and learning of writing in the classroom. The second question concerns the writing development of the focal students and how classroom-based cultural practices relate to their development.

As in Chapter 3, we first present an overview for the exchange, showing how the two teachers and their students negotiated the exchange as an activity, including how they fit it into their overall curriculum. Next the exchange writing is presented chronologically, as it unfolds for each of the focal students. We see how each piece of writing is framed in Robin's classroom, the resultant writing that her class sends, the British responses to it, and the British writing that comes and the responses in Robin's class to this writing from abroad.

Overview for the Exchange

In June when John visits Berkeley, with the research team present, he and Robin meet to plan their exchange. They decide on a photo essay and autobiographies for the first quarter, agree to send at least one exchange project per quarter, and to keep in touch about future projects. The research team brings up a desire to understand the cross-cultural experience from the teachers' and the students' points of view, and ask Robin and John to contemplate the possibility of having their students share their impressions of the other country in a final exchange project.

Timeline

Across the year of the exchange, John and Robin maintain communication with one another, and writing flows between their classes. Figure 4.3 charts the rhythm of the exchange across the year. Generally, in both classes most students participate in every exchange of writing. Robin's group sends a number of projects, but as Figure 4.3 shows the students work on the pieces for relatively short spans of time. Besides the opening photo essays and autobiographies, Robin's students send notes and cards when their autobiographies are slow in arriving because they were inadvertently sent by surface mail; short stories via computer of less than a page; 18 line poems also via computer; a picture booklet with captions about the school trip to Yosemite; a copy of the "district writing book" that contains writing from a few of the students in the class but mostly from other students in the district; and goodbye letters on the computer.

By contrast, John's group sends the planned piece per quarter, with those pieces each serving as a major and extended project for his class. After the first two exchanges (photo essays and autobiographical "snippets"), John's students take a number of weeks or even months to complete each project. They complete a 206-page short story anthology and two large bound books, one 183 pages long and another 119 pages. Along with two of the regular exchange projects, they also send brief and spontaneous sets of writing: descriptions of a hurricane that hit the U.K. and descriptions of the British television show, *East Enders*.

Word Counts

The word counts compare two parallel pieces for the focal students, the short stories and the autobiographies. They show a substantial imbalance in the amount of writing, with John's students sending significantly more than Robin's (see Table 4.1).[9] Although John considers the autobiographies a minor assignment, even calling them snippets, still his students' are three times as long as Robin's. The length difference for the stories is more major and reflects the kind of extended projects John's students write as compared to the briefer ongoing efforts of Robin's

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[9] A comparison of Table 4.1 with word count tables for the students in the other classes in the United States (Tables 3.1, 5.1, 6.1) shows that Robin's students wrote fewer words than students in any of the other U.S. exchange classes. However, it is important to note that Robin's group was labelled "mixed ability" while Judy Logan's was labelled "gifted" and that her group of seventh graders was two years younger than the two ninth-grade classes in the next two chapters.

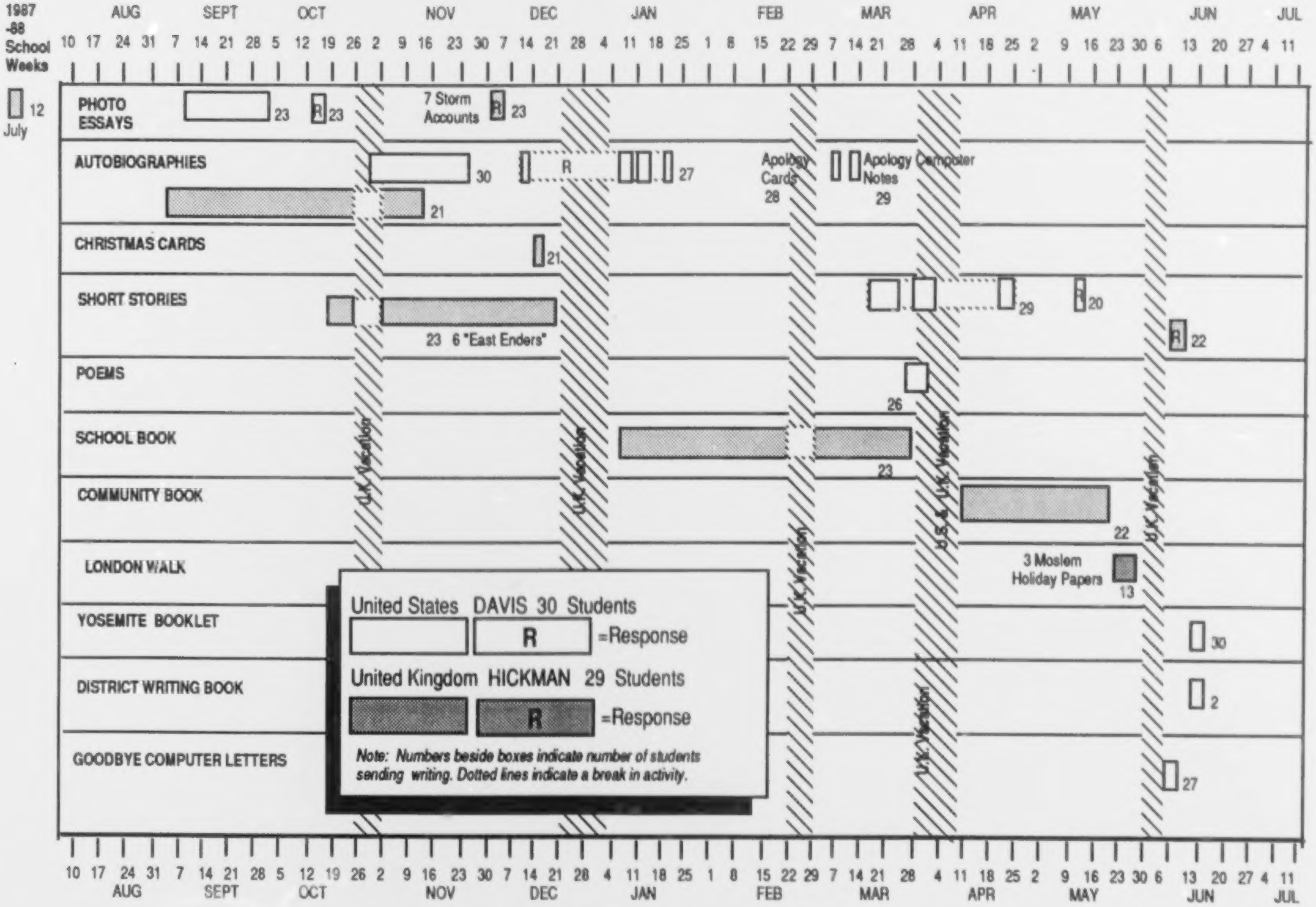
1987 -88 School Weeks
AUG SEPT OCT NOV DEC JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL
10 17 24 31 7 14 21 28 5 12 19 26 2 9 16 23 30 7 14 21 28 4 11 18 25 1 8 15 22 29 7 14 21 28 4 11 18 25 2 9 16 23 30 6 13 20 27 4 11
12 July
PHOTO ESSAYS
23
R 23
7 Storm Accounts
R 23
AUTOBIOGRAPHIES
30
R
27
21
Apology Cards 28
Apology Computer Notes 29
CHRISTMAS CARDS
21
SHORT STORIES
23 6 "East Enders"
29
R 20
R 22
POEMS
26
SCHOOL BOOK
23
COMMUNITY BOOK
22
LONDON WALK
3 Moslem Holiday Papers
13
YOSEMITE BOOKLET
30
DISTRICT WRITING BOOK
2
GOODBYE COMPUTER LETTERS
27
U.K. Vacation
U.K. Vacation
U.K. Vacation
U.S. & U.K. Vacation
U.K. Vacation
U.K. Vacation
United States DAVIS 30 Students
R =Response
United Kingdom HICKMAN 29 Students
R =Response
Note: Numbers beside boxes indicate number of students sending writing. Dotted lines indicate a break in activity.

Table 4.1
Autobiography and Short Story:

US/UK Focal Students' Word Counts

		AUTO-BIOGRAPHIES	SHORT STORIES	TOTAL WORDS FOR EACH FOCAL STUDENT
DAVIS	Elise	614	326	940
	Bambi	432	217	649
	Quirk	361	202	563
	Billy	339	177	516
HICKMAN	**Dickens**	**1,204**	**5,166**	**6,370**
	Nikita	**935**	**2,315**	**3,250**
	Anita/ Ince	**670**	**1,522**	**2,192**
	Catherine	**807**	**4,422**	**5,229**
TOTAL, DAVIS FOCAL STUDENTS		1,746	922	2,668
TOTAL, HICKMAN FOCAL STUDENTS		**3,616**	**13,425**	**17,041**

group. As Robin says in an interview with Ellie O'Sullivan from the British research team:

> John's projects tended to be a lot more elaborate than mine . . . That was one of the things that the kids noticed too. We tended to do maybe shorter, less in-depth kinds of projects. (December 15, 1988)

Organizing the Exchange

Melding the Exchange with the Regular Curriculum: Taking Over or Adding On. Robin and John fit the exchange into their curriculum in different ways. Like Kate and Judy, John devotes his entire writing curriculum to the exchange, taking advantage of its social and cultural potentials to meet his academic goals. By contrast, Robin sees the exchange as an addition to her usual curriculum, a set of activities which she adds and then integrates into the other activities her students do. From her point of view, the exchange mainly provides her students an opportunity for a cultural exchange of information while it allows them to practice particular kinds of writing for a peer audience. To help her students achieve this primary goal of sharing their cultures, Robin tries to help them establish personal connections with John's class. The frequent short pieces at the start of the year are consistent with her attempt to help her students establish this connection. Although Robin does not see the exchange as devoid of academic content, she expects to meet her major academic goals for literacy learning in activities outside the exchange. She explains to Ellie O'Sullivan that her students write shorter pieces for the exchange than John's do because they are also doing other types of writing (Interview, December 15, 1988).

Integrating the Social and the Academic: Conflicts between Personal Connections and Group Exchange. Like Judy and Kate, Robin also understands her students' needs to establish personal connections with their British audience as a base for the exchange even though, for Robin, the exchange is only a part of her writing curriculum. John, however, approaches the exchange activity differently. He does not consider personal correspondence a necessary base for his students. The exchange is his entire writing program; as he concentrates on how it can become a vehicle to help his students develop as writers while they are exchanging their cultures, he stresses the importance of his students becoming sensitive to their audience's needs but does not consider it important for them to get to know individuals personally. In fact, in helping his students grow as writers, he purposefully moves them toward writing for general, not individual, audiences. In the process, John's students do not respond personally to Robin's students; they do not reciprocate in ways that allow her group to establish the personal connections they seek. Thinking, though, that John's students have the same goals and needs they do, Robin's students try to respond quickly to what John's students write, consistently sending off short pieces of their own, in hopes of getting something back fast from England. On the other hand, thinking Robin's students have the same goals and needs they do, John's students feel that they never receive substantive work of the sort that they are producing and feel that they are putting in lots and essentially receiving little of interest in return. Since for Robin's students the personal connections are frustrated early on, much of the potential academic value for her students is frustrated as well.

Conflicts between Extended Projects and Brief Writing. A second value conflict arises around the issue of extended versus brief writing projects. Generally, for mixed ability classes, extended writing seems to be promoted and valued for a young adolescent age group more in England than in the United States. In the States, unless middle school students are labelled "gifted," as is Judy Logan's class, many educators advocate a fast pace, with rapidly changing activities to keep student interest high, not activities like extended writing projects that stretch across long periods of time. Although lengthy and extended pieces are sometimes part of the English/language arts curriculum in the United States, as in Judy Logan's "gifted" class, they are not the norm, especially for middle school students. Students at these grade levels do not routinely spend months or even weeks of intensive work on major pieces of writing. By contrast, the kind of sustained writing that John's students send as the year goes on has been a feature of British English teaching for the past two decades; British youngsters often start writing extended stories in the early elementary years.

The national surveys show these trends more broadly. The surveys reveal that secondary students in the United States are more likely to be writing than British secondary students but that the writing the students in the United States are doing is likely to be shorter, especially when it is worked on in class (Freedman & McLeod, 1988b, pp. 13-14). During the exchange, Robin and her students reacted to these deeply ingrained differences in the teaching approaches in the two countries:

> Robin: One of the things I think that . . . the kids discovered is that, you know, the approach is a little bit different. It seems to me, and you know, this is just our own conclusions, that we tended to, that they tended to write longer pieces, and I don't know if, that was you know part of what they are expected to do, or just part of their natural—
>
> O'Sullivan: I think it's a bit of both, actually. (Interview, December 15, 1988)

The expectations in the United States are reflected clearly in state, district, and local curriculum guidelines, that Robin as a teacher-leader has participated in shaping and that are consistent with much of the current literature on writing pedagogy. For example, the California Assessment Program, with its accompanying curricular guides, stresses variety over sustained work. The eighth-grade assessment requires students to write short pieces, impromptu and in 45 minutes, in one of eight varieties: autobiographical incident, problem-solution, report of information, evaluation, first hand biographical sketch, story, observation, and analysis and speculation about effects. With a matrix sampling design, a single student will only write on one of the eight types of writing, but students do not know to which type they will be randomly assigned (*Writing Assessment Handbook: Grade 8*, 1986). Teachers are expected to expose their students to these eight kinds of writing, something that necessitates asking them to do shorter exercises and that leaves a limited amount of time for more extended pieces (Loofbourrow, 1990).

Another indication of how deeply embedded this value conflict is surfaces when John, Robin, and their students demonstrate that they value the writing from their own country more than the writing in the other country. Although Robin's students recognize that the British students write more, in both their final assessments of the exchange year and in their interviews, all except Quirk say that they like their own way of writing better. For example, Bambi writes, "I think we spend a beter amount of time on ours and also I think we did a beter job." By contrast, John's students compare the writing of Robin's students to their work when they were younger. Dickens remarks in his final interview:

> I suppose they haven't got to the stage where they can begin to put more detail in, that I suppose they're sort of compressing it and not, you know, sort of saying everything they could do, and they're probably having a lot of help from their teacher, just like we did then. (Interview, July 19, 1988)

Knowing that many classrooms in the United States are tracked and judging from Robin's students' writing, one of the British researchers thought that her class must be designated as "lower ability."

In retrospect, that there would be this difference in the scope of the writing was evident in the summer meeting when John and Robin were trying to plan parallel activities, but it was not noticed at the time by Robin, by John, or by the research team. In examining transcripts of that conversation, we can see the two teachers interpreting tasks with the same label differently. To

Robin the photo essay is a collection of photographs with captions written by the students. John, on the other hand, used the photo essay as his final exchange project the previous year and envisioned a long class book with many photographs and with extensive text. In their face-to-face meeting, they clarify this difference in definition, and John agrees to the shorter project. However, once they begin to communicate through letters, definitional differences again become apparent. Later in the year, for example, John and Robin, in their letters, agree that their students will write fiction. John refers to this project as an "anthology of their short stories." Robin indicates that her class will be sending "stories." As Table 4.1 and Figure 4.3 show, for the actual project John's students write long pieces which they work on for several months; the stories that Robin's students send are written quickly, often in an hour or two, and consequently are brief.

Another important manifestation of the difference in the length and scope of the writing can be seen in the teachers' approaches to the computer. Robin works hard to collaborate with the research team to establish a computer link with England, something we hoped would serve as a useful support to the main work of the exchange in that it could facilitate informal communication. In fact, Robin and colleagues at her school[10] were the first of the exchange participants to develop techniques for sending exchange writing on international computer networks, and Albany was the only exchange school in the United States to develop routines that regularly allowed students to send exchange work on the computer. Even though Robin recognized that the main value of the computers was for informal, quick communication, since her students' pieces were relatively short and since many were not produced as booklets or collections, the computers also sometimes became useful as the main medium for the exchanges. For example, her class's stories are sent on the computer.

John, on the other hand, showed little interest in the computers once some initial efforts ran into difficulty. Given the activities his students were engaged in, he could not have used computers for the main part of the exchange. From his point of view, the potential advantages for easy, informal communication did not seem to be worth the time investment in getting the computer link established. The overwhelming majority of Robin's students (18 out of the 24 who respond or 75% of this subgroup of the class) write in their final evaluation of the exchange year that they felt excited about being able to ship their work to England virtually instantaneously but disappointed that John's class was not able to use the computers. Only two students say they were not enthusiastic about the computers, while four do not mention them.

Robin says that if she and John "had agreed that we were going to do, one really long involved piece, I would have been more than willing to do it. I, in fact, I really had wanted to do something like that." However, given everything else on her plate, she concludes: "It seemed like, no matter what you budget for time, it just isn't— And I hate to keep bringing that point up, but . . . that was the most frustrating part, is the time element" (Interview, December 15, 1988).

The contrasting approaches to teaching writing manifest in this exchange raise questions about the teaching and learning of writing in the United States. For teachers in the States, especially in the middle school grades, to integrate substantial exchange projects into their curriculum means making radical departures from standard curricular practice, in particular in the types of writing normally assigned. The activities within the classroom remain the most powerful determinant of achievement, and those activities are influenced by a complex of factors, from established curricular norms and accompanying testing programs, to ingrained cultural beliefs about the short attention span of all but the most gifted groups of young adolescent writers.

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[10] Linda Neilson, the librarian at Albany Middle School and her husband, Al Neilson, a computer expert who volunteered his time to the project, worked out many of the details of putting the computer link in place and training the students to use the system.

Writing for the Exchange

The length of each piece of writing sent by the focal students in Robin's class is presented on Table 4.2. In comparison to Judy's group (Table 3.2), Robin's students send relatively little. Like Judy's students, Robin's students also show some individual variation in the amount they send. As in Judy's class, most students send writing on most assignments.

Photo Essays and Tape Recording

A short introductory project, the first exchange activity for both classes is the photo essay and audiotape which Robin and John discussed during their June meeting. John decides to get his group to complete it when he returns to London in mid July since the school year in England ends in late July and he was currently teaching the class he would involve in the 1987-88 exchange.[11] Since John expects to send his class's photo essay over the summer, Robin hopes to distribute it when school begins in the fall and then for her group to start theirs soon after the start of the school year.

As Figure 4.3 shows, John's students compile their photo essay in late July, but he does not mail it until September 4. He explains to Robin in a letter accompanying the class essay:

> This material, which should have been with you many weeks ago, was ready by the middle of August. BUT there was one big snag: I didn't have your home or school address and could contact no one who might have had them.

He also confesses:

> I nearly had a nervous breakdown organising this in two lessons before school ended in July and I think the class nearly finished up killing me! Here it is—for better or worse and it does give a flavour of the school and of the kids.

Robin's students work on their photo essay and tape recording project during most of September. Compared to John's group's two-day production, Robin's group seems to have spent a long time. At this point she appears to be responding to John's original sense of extended work that he expressed in their first interview, but in her September 24 journal entry, Robin notes with relief, "Seeing John's project helped me reduce my expectations—I'm making it more succinct, not as much writing so we can get it done and in the mail." She is anxious about the length of time it is taking her group to complete this project and about the reasons for the delay:

> I've got to get this going so John's kids can get as excited as mine. One thing to note, however, he had his kids do this project before they broke for their summer holiday. As quickly as I hoped to get this off to London, there's no doubt it takes a few weeks to get to know the kids.

The fact that Robin has to get a new class running while John meets his same group from the previous year has dramatic consequences. In the United States at the start of the school year, inevitably much time is needed just for teachers and students to establish effective collaboration and to know what to expect of one another.

The Writing. The British booklet contains 14 pictures of small groups of students from John's class, posed at various locations around Forest Gate. The pictures mainly show the

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[11] In June and early July, when John was in the U.S. on his two-week study leave from his school, another teacher covered his class.

Table 4.2
Number of Words

	ELISE	BAMBI	QUIRK	BILLY
RESPONSE TO PHOTO ESSAYS	57	95	71	54
AUTOBIOGRAPHIES	614	432	361	339
RESPONSE TO AUTOBIOGRAPHIES	162	190	----	161
APOLOGY CARDS	61	28	34	35
APOLOGY COMPUTER NOTES	49	33	53	50
SHORT STORIES	326	217	202	177
POEMS	----	113	123	128
GOODBYE COMPUTER LETTERS	64	69	----	46
TOTAL	1,333	1,177	844	990

school's exterior and the playgrounds. They are accompanied by captions of one to three lines written by the students. The following is typical:

> This is a photo of (IN ORDER) TROY BUCKLER left Charles McCafferey middle Jeff Day right. in a Gym. Forest Gate Community School.

The audiotape contains greetings from John's to Robin's students. In it, one of John's students playfully mimics an American accent.

Once completed, the photo essay from Robin's class looks similar to the one from England. The booklet from the United States contains 16 pages of pictures of the exterior and interior of Albany Middle School, including pictures of its staff and students. Captions, one to four sentences in length, identify people and places. The following is representative:

> This is a picture of the outside of or life arts center. This is where our science room, art room, sewing room, food room and vice principal's office are located. These facilities are mostly used by the 8th Graders.

The accompanying tape from Robin's group also resembles the British work, with one of her students mimicking a British accent. Two of the focal students comment about making the tape in their journals. Billy says, "My voice dosn't sound that bad but I don't like what I said" (October 2, 1987). Bambi reveals, "We all listened to our tape and when it came to us we pluged our ears exsept colin he hid behind the book case. I think our book is real good and I am having a lot of fun doing this" (October 2, 1987).

Reception of the British Writing: Seeking Common Ground. According to Robin, the British photo essay and accompanying audiotape are well received when they arrive in her class. Robin describes the enthusiasm that the tape generated:

> They [my students] (as well as me) were completely taken with what they [John's students] had to say. They cheered if the English kids liked the same football or baseball team, etc. (Journal, September 24, 1987)

Robin concludes her journal entry, "There's nothing like a 'package' to get things going."

The students give little information about their responses to the British work at this point. Although they write in their journals the day they first see the photo essay, Robin asks them in this entry to generate ideas for their own writing after reading the British work. Of the four focal students, only Quirk comments on what is received; although he finds the British accents strange, he says the tape is "fun to listen to."

In an October 3 letter to John accompanying her class's photo essay, Robin thanks him for his group's essay and tape. She also promises, "Next week I'm going to have my class write letters to your class responding to the tape and your [photo essay]. They're going to be short and quick." Table 4.2 verifies their brevity, showing the number of words each of the focal students write.

These letters, which are dated October 13, show the students' enthusiasm for the exchange project and for the work they received. Most members of the class thank John's students for their package and comment favorably on it, ask questions about England, and express enthusiasm for the exchange. In these letters Robin's students spend most of their energy attempting to establish personal communication. They also provide general positive evaluations of the British writing and extend a few experiences initiated in the British writing, with the sparsity of this category showing the little they can find to connect with.

U.S. Response as Evaluation. Bambi writes a typical letter, addressed to the whole class, which she begins with a positive and general evaluation:

> October 13, 1987
>
> Dear Forest Gate,
> I really enjoyed your package, the cover of your book [is] neat. We sent our book I hope you enjoy it.

Elise and Quirk offer similar evaluations. Elise writes, "We recived your book—it was interesting." And Quirk opens:

> Dear Forest Gate Students.
> I have been enjoying the writing corespondance between our two schools. Our first package to you is in the mail. I hope you enjoy it. We have enjoyed the book and the tape thoroughly.

U.S. Response as Personal Communication. All four focal students use their letters to attempt to establish personal communication, Bambi with an extended passage and the other three by expressing hopes for more British mail. Bambi continues her letter by trying to establish personal contact. She asks questions and gives information unrelated to the photo essay:

> Is your school a year round private school? Ours is a nine month public school with a lot of vacations. Like Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving and a lot of one day vacations. Plus a three month summer vacation. Well got to go now.
>
> Buy now
> Bambi
>
> P.S. We all got a real cool teacher do you hear me? even though she is 1,500 years old

Bambi draws a rose to fill in space at the bottom of the page.

Quirk, who asserts his desire to write, closes with the following:

> I hope to have a lot more correspondence writing in the future. I'm hoping that I will get to know your class better soon. And that's about all. Bye.

Billy concludes with similar phrasing, "I am looking forward to sending you some more letters." Elise follows suit with, "Well I'm looking forward to hearing from you!"

U.S. Response as Extending Experience. Billy and Elise attempt to extend experiences recorded in the British school photos by relaying a similar experience. Billy writes:

> Dear Forest Gate,
> I was amazed at the size of your school, it's huge. I was wondering if your school had a mascot like a bear or a snake or a bird. The mascot of Albany Middle School is a cobra.

Similarly Elise queries:

> Your school looks neat. About how big would would say it was? How many kids are in your class?

Response from Great Britain: Continuing the Response Dialogue at Cross Purposes. On December 10 Robin's class receives thank-you letters from John's group. Accompanying these responses, seven British students also include separate accounts of a large storm that recently ravaged the London area while seven others discuss the storm in their thank-you letters.

These letters come after the U.S. letters arrive but provide no direct responses to them, with none mentioning the letters specifically. They instead comment on the tapes and photos, the formal part of the exchange. Rather than predominantly initiating personal communication as Robin's students do, John's students respond directly to the U.S. exchange work.[12] They evaluate it positively and appreciatively and then extend the experiences embedded in the work by comparing Forest Gate to the pictures from Albany. Rather than saying that they hope for "correspondence" and "letters" as Robin's students do, John's students, at this point, express their hopes for "work" and response to the "work" they will send.

British Response as Evaluation. These thank you letters provide Robin's students with positive evaluations. Bonet's is typical: "The book that you sent us was very interesting and I can't wait to recieve all your other work." Nikita begins her letter in the same vein:

> Hi (its me!!)
>
> Thank you for your wonderfull tape, I found it very interesting, I can't wait to recieve the rest of your work, Exchanging work with you should be fun.
> I liked your book about you school

After a few words about the school, she continues:

> I liked the photographs and tape about yourself and you all sound very energetic,

Anita also begins similarly:

> Hi remember me Anita.
> I'm going to talk to you about the work you sent us.
> Thank you for the work you sent us we liked it very much.
> We all listened to the tape you sent is it was really good.
> We all hope you liked our work.

Ince too starts off with compliments:

> To
> Albany
> Middle
> School
>
> Hello my name is Ince and I would like to say how much we enjoyed your work.

British Response as Extending Experience. After their initial evaluations, John's focal students continue by mentioning the Albany photographs and then extending the experience by comparing them to Forest Gate. For example, Nikita writes:

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[12] John notes that four or five of his students wrote pen pal letters to the homes of some of Robin's students.

> and from the look of your photographs your schools looks very different from Forest Gate High School,

Then later in her note she continues:

> It seems alot bigger and more adventurous and interesting too.
> Perhaps one day we could come and visit your school or Vice Versa
>
> From Nikita

Ince writes:

> When I was looking through your book I noticed that your school is much bigger then our one is. And I would like to come to your school.

Anita too extends the experience depicted in the Albany photos:

> We still have the photographs you sent us it was very intresting in the photo's your school looks big and tidy
> Well! Our school looks a bit like yours but not that big.
> For example you have lockers and we don't we just have to keep our stuff with us in our bags.

British Response as Personal Communication. Only Anita relays a personal experience of her own:

> We also have a tack shop where they sell sweets and many other things like crisps.
> The tack shop was organised by the fifth forms.
> The money raised would be collected so that the people who organised the tack can go dancing in a disco or a trip.
> We all like writing to you I hope you will get in toach
> Bye the way I'm sending a story I hope you'll like it.
> Thank you.

Conclusions. The photo essays serve as an effective first project that potentially could open a sharing of personal experiences for this exchange. However, as the different emphases in the response functions show, the classes are already operating at cross-purposes to one another, with John's group focused on the exchange work and Robin's hungry for correspondence. Even so, the students are beginning to learn about one another and develop relationships. In addition, the general compliments and signs of appreciation, which function as the only evaluative response from either country, make the students feel appreciated. The fact that students are writing to the group rather than to individuals assures that no one feels left out.

Autobiographies

During their June meeting John and Robin decide that after the photo book, their students will write autobiographies. The autobiographies will be the major exchange piece for the first quarter. John mentions that during the previous year, many of the teachers in England, including himself, were somewhat dissatisfied with the autobiography as an opening assignment. However, having no better idea, John and Robin decide to begin with the autobiography again. John does suggest that the chapters might include things like funny anecdotes which would actually be part of another work, seeming still to want to avoid this assignment. Robin's main concern is time rather than the assignment itself; she does not want her students to spend too much time on it. When a member of the research team suggests a span of about three weeks, Robin says three weeks would be "maximum."

In her October 3 letter to John accompanying her class's photo essays, Robin reports, "The following week we'll start on our autobiographies. My hope is they'll be ready to go in about three weeks." According to Robin's journal entries, her students work on their autobiographies for the planned three weeks, from about October 30 to November 24. In the end, like Judy's students but unlike John's, Robin's students write their most extended pieces for the entire exchange on this autobiography exchange assignment (see Tables 3.2 and 4.2).

Unfortunately, the research team at Berkeley mistakenly sent the autobiographies from Robin's class by surface mail. Although completed and mailed in early November, they did not arrive in England until late March. The research team and Robin and her class did not know about this mishap until early March when Alex McLeod visited the United States and commented that the autobiographies from Robin's students had not arrived in John's class. At this point, the research team immediately sent duplicate copies, with the copies and originals arriving together, and Robin's students wrote spontaneous notes and cards of apology to John's students. Given the needs of Robin's students for personal writing, this mishap prevented a round of needed "correspondence" since John's group surely would have sent thank-you letters upon receiving the autobiographies; the delay had a serious dampening effect on their experience.

As with Judy's class, the autobiographies were a major topic of conversation in the focal student interviews, and so again we include supplementary information about how the students wrote the autobiographies and detailed information about how they responded to the writing from England.

The Writing: Processes and Products. According to Figure 4.3 John's students spend two months on their autobiographies as compared to the three weeks Robin's group spends. Although the two classes finish within a couple of weeks of each other in November, since the autobiographies from Robin's class are sent by surface mail, they are long in coming.

The autobiographies from Robin's class are much like letters of introduction, except that they are presented inside a cover decorated with drawings and a photograph of the writer. They range from one and a half pages typed to four and a half pages handwritten, with lists and lots of space. The writing begins with general salutations—"Hi there" from Elise; "Hello" from Billy; and "Hi" from Bambi and Quirk. With only a couple of minor deviations, the writing contains a short introductory paragraph of general information about the student's life and family, information about the writer's hobbies and interest in sports, and a description of a typical school day. Four students choose adjectives for each letter of their names and call these listings "poems."

Initially, Bambi expected she would be writing a more elaborate piece than Robin intended:

> I thought she was going to have us write a book when she first mentioned it. Like, she goes, you guys are going to be writing autobiographies to um England. I thought it would be like a big humungous book that would take like the whole year to make. . . . Cause I thought it would be a book like, about that big, from like when I was a baby until like seventh grade life. And what I expected in my future, but it wasn't. (Interview, March 29, 1988)

Bambi reflects on her feelings when she discovered that Robin expected "just your seventh grade life":

> But when she said just your seventh grade life like about a week later, um I didn't know really how to feel. (Interview, March 29, 1988)

Bambi recalls that she decided what to include based on Robin's suggestions. Robin listed a number of topics the students might want to cover in their autobiographies:

> She suggested to do something um like a daily schedule but not in a list. She said to talk about your family, and how you feel about uh the family and what kinds of things you do. And sports and stuff. (Interview, March 29, 1988)

Bambi reports spending about two weeks of class time working on her autobiography as well as one night at home to add the final touches:

> The last thing I did was I took it home over night, and I read through it, and I made some changes, and um I write down the spelling mistakes that she hadn't corrected. I re-did the cover, and I just did some touch up work on it, and then I brought it the next day. (Interview, March 29, 1988)

After giving her name, height, and weight, Bambi includes in her first paragraph:

> I love football, parties, and going out with my friends. I don't do sports much all exscept for at P.E. {Physical Education} and when I play football. I love math, English, french, and P.E best. I like to write stories, talk on the phone, and listening to the raidio. I also, like to read, my favorite book are (the doll and one boy to many). I love to draw roses.

She continues with her daily schedule:

> When I wake up it is 6:30. I take a 15 min. shower. I do my hair, makup, and get dressed in a half hour. then I brush my teeth, make my lunch, and pack my back pack in 10 min. I leave at 7:30. And get to school at 7:45. This gives me 15 min. to talk to my 8th grade friends before they go to class. And At 8:00 my 7th and 6th grade friends.

She adds her daily class schedule to this paragraph, ending with her daily leisure pursuits:

> After school I take off with my friends. I come home at 5:00 and talk on the phone, Listen to the radio, and do my homework. At 7:00 I read a book or do whatever. At 10:00 I go to bed.

After a paragraph about her family life, she concludes her autobiographical writing with a memory:

> I remember when my mom broke her arm. My sister and I had to work together to make my mom better. We had to clean the house, make dinner, dress my mom, and a lot more. It was hard but it gave Jenny {my sister} and I a chance to get to know each other a little better. We talked, argued, laughed and talked about boys. I love Jenny and I'm almost positive that she loves me.

Although Bambi says, "When I was writing my autobiography, I told the truth," she is not happy with the outcome. She dislikes her art work on the cover and the picture of herself that she included, and she thinks the writing would be boring to the U.K. students: "Even though it [the autobiography] was complete . . . I think it was too boring" (Interview, March 29, 1988). In the same interview she also adds: "I really didn't write down that I like writing though. That's one thing that I'm mad about." In spite of expressing her dissatisfaction, she has no stragegies for improving her work. Even by the end of the year, when Bambi is asked what she would do if given an opportunity to revise her autobiography, she only says she would "change around the wording" in one place where she sensed some redundancy in word choice (Interview, June 6, 1988).

Unlike Bambi, Elise does not mention any preconceptions about the scope of the autobiography. Elise says she decided what to include not based on Robin's list but based on her own thoughts about the British students and the kind of information she would like to get back from them and from models Robin read to the class:

> I just thought about what I would want to hear if somebody wrote me an autobiography. And then I wrote it. And also Miss Davis read us an old autobiography that somebody did in her class and she gave good examples, so we thought that would be good. So most of the people in the class did like a schedule and then stuff that they like and a little introduction and, you know, an ending, and a story. Oh yeah, a little story at the end.
>
> I was wondering if they like to do the same kind of stuff we like to do. Just you know, if they were doing the same kind of stuff that we do. What subjects they were studying and where they learn math and stuff like that. So, you know, I included all that stuff. And what their hobbies were and stuff. I included that in mine, since they would know me and maybe someone with the same hobbies or something would like that.
>
> I just included stuff that I thought somebody should know about me. Stuff that I would want to know about somebody else. That's how I did it. I thought, well what would I want to know about somebody from England. You know, what they like to do and what they do after school and stuff. I put that down. (Interview, April 13, 1988)

Like Bambi, Elise takes advantage of the two weeks of class time Robin provides to write her autobiography and then takes it home overnight to complete the final draft and make corrections. Elise describes the flow of activity:

> I didn't think it took that long. It may have taken two weeks just because she may have had us do it like two periods one week and then two periods the next week and then take it home to finish it. (Interview, April 13, 1988)

Whereas Bambi presents facts, when Elise writes she uses her strong sense of audience and editorializes on her experiences. For example, while Bambi only lists her schedule, Elise annotates her list:

> 7:00—my mom wakes me up. I turne over and go back to sleep.
>
> 7:11—I groan and get out of bed and walk blindly to the shower.
>
> 7:25—Get dressed, do my hair, pack my back pack (while listening to KMEL my favorite radio station. I like all sorts of music but top 40 hits are my favorites)

After continuing in this vein for 14 entries, Elise, like Bambi writes about her leisure after-school activities. This entry is also more specific and elaborated than Bambi's:

> After school I walk home with Amy or have a friend come over or go over to a friend's house. I usually get home around 3:25 and have a snack while watching "DAYS OF OUR LIVES" my favorite soap. I only get to watch the last half hour because I don't get home intime to watch the whole show. Then I do my homework and eat dinner then watch T.V. or something.

Like Bambi, Elise concludes her autobiography with a memory, which she introduces as though she were writing a letter, with direct address to John's class, calling them "you":

> HMMMMMMM let's see you know what I look like—what I do all day, what my family's like, where I live and what my hobbies and favorites are. So what else should I tell you?!?! O.K. I think I'll write about a memory.

Elise says she only included a memory as part of her autobiography because her teacher told her to:

> I probably wouldn't have included a um, a memory, but Miss Davis said that was a good idea. Because I wouldn't really want to know a memory about somebody until I got to know them a little better maybe. But I guess that's kind of a good way of getting to somebody too. (Interview, April 13, 1988)

Elise's memory is about a failed bread-baking project with her mother and her aunt:

> What happend was one day when I was about 10 my mom and I flew down to Los Angeles to visit my aunt. Every time we go to see my aunt she always has some-sort of a new cooking project for us to try to make. This time it was bread.
>
> We spent almost 2 hours trying to make this bread but unknown to each of us I added too little water, my mom added too much flour and my aunt added salt insted of sugar! Well to make a LONG story short when the bread was done we could have painted it and used it as a center piece. Oh well at least we had fun trying!!

Elise says she wrote about the baking memory because:

> It was just something that I was just thinking about that day. . . . I don't know why I was thinking about it. It just popped into my head, and so I wrote it. I thought it was kind of funny. A baking tragedy. My mom and my aunt still talk about that everytime they see each other. So it's kind of a vivid memory. At the time it wasn't too fun, but now it's kind of funny. (Interview, April 13, 1988)

Again Elise's rendition of her memory is more elaborated than Bambi's was. Elise could have been encouraged to include even more detail as becomes clear from her elaboration of her memory in her final interview, when she comments as she reads her autobiography aloud:

> E: [Reads first paragraph of memory, stopping before last sentence.]
>
> One year, we tried, we made breaded, you know, kind of chicken things, except they weren't, they were fish. It was really good. But we made like ten times too much. And we ended up the entire visit eating these breaded fish things, you know, for lunch, and for dinner.
>
> [Begins with last sentence of first paragraph and reads through second paragraph of memory.]
>
> Cause I remember, I really I really I didn't read it carefully, and it said like two and two thirds, and I put like three and two thirds cup water, and my aunt took the salt container out of the cabinet and poured it in instead of sugar, and my Mom measured the wrong amount of flour, so we were having a bit of trouble.
>
> SWF: Sounds like everybody contributed to it.
>
> E: And something was wrong with the yeast. It was really hard. You could bang it against the table. It was pretty sad.

SWF: Well it's good that it came out just a hundred percent awful. You can laugh about it for a long time.

E: I remember I was staying up. I wanted to taste the bread before I went to bed, so I was staying up watching Robin Hood on t.v. And I was going, when's the bread going to be ready? When's the bread going to be ready? And we decided we wouldn't have dessert or anything. We'd have fresh baked bread, and we um we got fresh butter, and everything like that. We came out with it. Oops. We all felt so bad. It was like eating play dough. (Interview, June 6, 1988)

Like Bambi, Elise thinks that her autobiography is boring. Elise attributes the problem to her life, which she says "is so boring." She describes autobiographical writing: "It's not really writing. It's just kind of telling." When asked about the difference between writing and telling, she replies, "The style is just kind of I'm telling you what I'm doing. It's not like you're writing a story where you can change it" (Interview, June 6, 1988).

Given Elise's construction of what an autobiography should be and her feeling that her life is boring, she has no sense of how to make this writing interesting. At the end of the year, when she is asked if she would revise her autobiography in any way if she were rewriting it, she mentions some points of fact that she would correct, but nothing else. For example, about listening to KMEL radio at 7:25, she says:

> I don't really listen to the radio that much anymore in the mornings. Um I like all sorts of music, but Top 40 were my favorite last year. (Interview, June 6, 1988)

In contrast to Bambi's and Elise's two weeks, Billy recalls writing his autobiography in two hours in a single draft on the computer. He got a little help from his mom with spelling and final proofreading. Unlike Elise who concentrates on including what she thinks will interest British students, Billy includes information that is important to him:

> I . . . put in the the things that I really liked and didn't put things that I liked but they weren't that important. These are things that I really like and they're important to me. (Interview, March 29, 1988)

His writing follows a form similar to the others. He does not include a memory but does write enthusiastically about his hobby, downhill skiing:

> I like many sports but my favorite sport is down-hill skiing. I like the speed of this sport but I don't like competing with other skiers. I don't really like competing in any sport that is one-on-one like track and field. Whenever we go to South Lake Tahoe in the winter we take one of my friends to go skiing with me. Lake Tahoe is 12 miles wide and 22 miles long, located in the Sierra Nevada mountain range. It is about 200 miles from my home.

Billy concludes with his rendition of his school schedule, in a single, relatively impersonal paragraph:

> An average school day in our class goes like this: Second period we have English where we learn English skills. Third period we have foreign language; I take French. Fourth period is math where we learn basic and complex mathematical equations. Fifth period is social studies. Sixth period is when we eat our lunches. Seventh period is science when we learn about the world around us. Eight period in P.E. where we exercise.

When asked at the end of the year, if he would revise his autobiography, he replies that he would take into account his new knowledge about England:

> I might add a bit, um might tell how our school's different from theirs, about the homework and tests and such. (Interview, June 6, 1988)

Although not enthusiastic about the exchange, Billy alone shows that he could use his growing sense of his audience to help him revise his writing.

Unlike Billy, who decides what to write on the basis of what's important to him, and Bambi, who writes what the teacher tells her to write, Quirk, like Elise, considers his readers' interests when he writes his autobiography. About what he chooses to include, Quirk says: "Just try to figure out what's interesting about me and put it on paper" (Interview, March 29, 1988), implying that he chooses "what's interesting" to the British students.

Quirk tells how Robin framed the autobiography assignment:

> Ms. Davis just came and gave us some kind of recommendations like describe yourself physically and your interest and what you've done, anything big you've done, what your hobbies and interests are and stuff. (Interview, March 29, 1988)

Quirk too does most of his writing in class. He integrates his daily schedule with general information about himself in his first paragraph. Following his physical description, he writes:

> I like sports. Baseball and volleyball are my favorites, and I'm pretty good at both. School's ok but it could be better. I go to homeroom 1st, 4th, and 6th periods. Spanish is 2nd period, math 3rd and P.E. (Physical Education) is 7th. We start school at 8:50 am and we getout at 3:05 pm. After school I go home, rest, maybe start my homework. Then I might go out with a friend to Shattuck Ave. or Solano, or maybe just ride around. Then I'd (or we'd) come home and watch T.V. or do homework. Then I'd just sit around and doddle. It's the same on weekends except there's no school and I fill up the time with more doddling and seeing friends.

Quirk next describes his home:

> We live in a small house on a narrow street in a nice friendly neighborhood. We live out of the big city but not to far from it. It's only a half a mile to school so I can just ride my bike or walk and sometimes I get a ride.

He then concludes with a paragraph on his trip to Europe and with his hopes of visiting England, not including a memory. At the end of the year, when Quirk looks back at his autobiography, he says he would leave it as it is, except for correcting a couple of errors in fact; for example, his age is now 13, not 12.

To conclude, these four students show different interests and concerns about writing. Quirk and Elise, the two most advanced writers, think about their readers from the start. Bambi follows her teacher's directions. Billy writes for himself. Quirk, Elise, and Bambi spend the allotted time for this writing. None of these three seem to have any idea about how they could have done a better job, even by the end of the year when they look back at this writing. By contrast, Billy, who spends the least time and begins by writing for himself, by his end of the year interview is aware that he could improve his writing by better accounting for his audience's wishes. Robin framed the autobiography writing task as though it were a letter of introduction, with the addition of a memory. With only Bambi expressing some surprise, this framing set these students' expectations not only for their own writing but for the writing that was to come from England.

John, consistent with his original reservations about autobiographies, continues to conceptualize this project as something relatively narrow in scope, although he does not lean toward the personal letter in his framing. In his September 4 letter accompanying his group's photo essay, John writes that his students are planning their next project which he calls autobiographical "snippets." In his mid-November letter to Robin that accompanies the autobiographies, John indicates his high expectations for his students as he apologizes for what he considers a weak effort on their part:

> We worked on autobiographical "snippets" so as to avoid the bulkiness of fully-fledged autobiographies but they're not as detailed as I would have liked and some of their ideas about what makes up autobiographical writing are pretty outlandish!! Anyway I thought it was best to get them off to you in this pretty "raw" state and at least the photographs will bring some of the deader ones to life.

Although a small project to John, the "snippets" are longer than Robin's group's autobiographies, on average two to three times (see Table 4.1). Since each writer focuses on only one topic, the narrowed topic makes the writing more detailed. The British snippets include six about a hobby (karate, computers, collecting comics, etc.); eight about a trip the writer took; four about an event in the author's life; and three statements about the writers' favorite things to do or descriptions of a typical school day. Although these topics could be approached personally, consistent with John's orientation toward exchange work rather than personal interchange, the British students approach them with formality and distance. Elise recalls:

> When we first got their autobiographies, it was kind of confusing because they weren't like our autobiographies. They weren't like, well we like to do this, and this is what our schedule is, and stuff like that. It was an incident, that's how we got to know them, through that incident kind of thing.
>
> I was kind of disappointed because I really wanted to know more about them personally, than about, you know, a moment they had. (Interview, April 13, 1988)

Nevertheless, Elise noticed cross-cultural contrasts embedded in the writing and found them as well as some of the content interesting:

> The thing that was really interesting is when they sent us like their autobiographies about stuff they were interested in, and how they use different words and stuff like that. I thought that was kind of neat.
>
> They were kind of interesting because you got to know, like what they like to do, you know. We kind of know that Catherine likes to play the clarinet now. (Interview, April 13, 1988)

The hobby descriptions tend to focus more on the hobby than on the students' involvement in the hobby as Nikita's opening illustrates:

> I'm Nikita I live in the U.K.. What you're about to read now is all about my hobbies. my main hobby is karate. Karate is a form of martial Arts. It is practised all over the world and it is a form of self defense. A great sport.

She later describes the competitions in some detail:

> On a fighting mat the judges that sit in front of the mats are technique judges they are there to watch you and note down all the good and bad moves you make and they decide on the points you get and who to give the points to.

Although the trip accounts are in first person narrative and describe the places the writers visited and how they travelled there, they are replete with facts rather than emotions. For example, Helen begins:

> My name's Helen, I'm going to tell you about my two favourite holidays in Scotland and Scarborough. I went to Scotland in 1985 for two weeks. My family and I had to travel 602 miles and it took 12 hours. We got to Scotland and finally reached a steep hill. We had a great view when we got to the top we were miles up perched nearly on top of a mountain.

Of the four event pieces, two do not focus on the student as the central person affected. For example, Bruno tells of a fishing experience that actually involves his brother and other men, not him:

> Later when I had my lunch I went to the river to see if my brother had caught anything, but he didn't have any fish. But one of the other men had caught a fish it was the biggest one caught today. He was satisfied with and went home. Then I went with my friends to swim in the pond.

By contrast, as Elise mentions, Catherine writes about her clarinet examination:

> There was a man there called Mr. Smith and he sat at the piano and asked me to play the pieces of music. I played them okay but by the time I came to my scales my knees felt like jelly. He asked me to do some scales but I didn't do well on them.

Reception of British Writing: Trying to Connect to Individuals. Soon after the British autobiographies arrive and right before the Christmas break, Robin asks her students to read one British autobiography and to make notes in their journals about what this British student wrote. Then in January, when Robin's students return from their vacation, she asks them to write a letter to a British student in which they introduce themselves to this student and thank him or her for the autobiographical piece. The letters are more elaborate than the responses to the photo essays, with all students writing about twice as much, except Quirk who does not write this time (see Table 4.2).

In contrast to the photo essay responses which Robin's students address to the class, they address these responses to individuals. Robin's students are trying to establish a personal relationship and to develop a personal correspondence with British partners, something they feel they have to initiate since they perceive that the British autobiographies give little personal information. Elise speaks for the class at this point, "Nobody really knew who to write to and who had similar interests to their own" (Interview, April 13, 1988). She then explains how she came to write to Catherine:

> I was with my friend Cristine, and Cristine and I were just reading one [of the British autobiographies], and she said we had to write to somebody and we just thought she sounded kind of interesting [UC]. So we just wrote to her, or just kept writing to her, cause it was easier than switching. (Interview, April 13, 1988)

By early February, Robin's students send their letters to John's students (several British students are sent letters by more than one of Robin's students since 27 letters go from Robin's class to 21 students in John's class). Because of the mailing problem with the autobiographies themselves, these letters from Robin's students arrive in England before their autobiographies do. Again, all of Robin's focal students attend mostly to the personal communication function of response, with a few of them finding a few British experiences that they can connect with and extend. Only Bambi provides an evaluation of the writing, indicating that Robin's students are moving farther and farther away from the main exchange writing as they attempt to forge a personal connection.

U.S. Response as Personal Communication. Since the letters from Robin's students consist mostly of personal communication and since they have not yet established any personal relationship with John's students, they make their pieces redundant with personal writing they have already included, especially what appeared in their autobiographies that they fear might be missed. As Elise says, "I had just kind of restated some of the stuff that I had put down in my autobiography in case she [Catherine] didn't want to go look up the autobiography" (Interview, April 13, 1988).

In her letter to Catherine, Elise begins with a general introduction in which she tells about her interests outside school, including shopping and talking on the phone which she discussed in her autobiography. She concludes her letter with a list of her favorite television shows and magazines and then with questions for Catherine about her favorites. Elise also includes her home address and invites Catherine to write her there.

When Billy writes to Ian, he too tries to relate personally. He includes a few words about his hobbies and asks about Ian's concluding, "I would like to know more about you."

After a brief positive evaluation of Charlie's autobiography, Bambi mainly attempts to establish personal rapport with him:

> I am choosing to write you letters personally. If your read my autobiography you could see that my picture was really bad, I mean horible. so when I get a beter pictur of me I will send it to you!

Bambi concludes with a discussion of her hobbies and her Christmas vacation and with the request, "Write back soon."

U.S. Response as Extending Experience. In the middle of her letter Elise responds to Catherine's autobiography by extending an experience Catherine relayed:

> It was interesting to read about your "MOST FRIGHTENING MOMENT." I just had a similar experience when i tried out for the play! I'm not very musical so I don't play an instrument but the clarinet sounds cool! Actually I once tried to play the piano but lets just say it didn't work out!

About this passage Elise says, "I really couldn't relate . . . but I tried to, because I once played the piano and it didn't work out" (Interview, April 13, 1988).

Similarly, Billy writes to Ian about his autobiography:

> When your brother stayed up all night and caught a very large fish I was fascinated and would like to know more about the fish. Could you tell me approximately how much it weighed, how long it was, and what kind of fish it was?

Billy also asks about the storm piece:

> In your response letter you wrote about a terrible storm that knocked out power and blew over trees, fences and anything else not anchored to the ground. Were you outside during the storm? Did anyone you know get hurt in the storm? What were your feelings during the storm, were you scared/interested, I'm curious?

U.S. Response as Evaluation. Bambi, who writes to Charlie, begins with a positive and general evaluation of his autobiography before moving into the main part of her letter which is personal communication:

> Dear Charlie,
>
> Thanks for the Card. I am thrilled to receive it. I read your autobiography and letter. I thought they were very good.

U.S. Apology Cards and E-Mail. Robin's students have a second response opportunity in early March when they write John's students to apologize for the mishap in the mailing of the autobiographies. Assured that new copies of their writing are being sent, Robin's students immediately write apology cards for John's class and send apology letters by computer mail.

At this point, Robin's students are both upset and nervous. Bambi discusses her feelings about the delay:

> I think it's [the exchange] going pretty good except the fact that we lost the autobiographies in the mail, and they didn't write back to us because they didn't have it, and they couldn't talk to us about anything. (Interview, March 29, 1988)

She continues with another concern—that her class might have to redo the autobiographies from scratch:

> We were really scared, cause we thought that we were gonna have to do them all over again. (Interview, March 29, 1988)

But then Bambi notes that Robin reassured the class:

> And then she [Robin] said no, we don't have to do them all over again cause the photocopies or something. (Interview, March 29, 1988)

The computer letters arrived first in England. Most of the girls send e-mail to individuals (9 to individuals and 3 to the class), while most boys address the class (14 to the class and 3 to individuals). For example, Billy writes:

> Dear class,
>
> We heard this morning that you did not get our autobiographies and are mad. We are now sending you the photocopies of our autobiographies.
>
> On thursday Mr. McCloud is coming to our class to tell us about you. It should be very interesting.
>
> Sincerely,
> Billy

Quirk too addresses the class:

> Well I'm finally writing a letter again. I guess your class hasn't received anything lately because of the autobiographies pachage getting lost. I'm glad to be writing to you again. I enjoy writing to you and hope to write more. I don't really have more to say,just write bach soon.

About this computer note, Quirk says,

> In that I just couldn't think of anything to say, so I just said just stupid stuff. I didn't know it was going to get sent. (Interview, March 29, 1988)

Elise writes a personal note to Catherine:

> Dear Catherine,
>
> Hi!! How are you? I'm okay but I'm looking forward to spring break. Wejust heard that you didn't receive our autobiographies and I'm really sorry! Fortunately CAL made copies and you should get them soon. I hope to hear from you soon.
>
> More later
> -Elise

Bambi sends her computer mail to Charlie:

> Dear Charlie, Hi, how are you? I'm fine. I'm sorry you did not get your autiobiographies. I can't ( ) until March 18th when we have our school dance. It's always fun.
>
> Your Friend, Bambi

The apology cards are addressed exactly as the computer mail is, except for Bambi's which is addressed to the class. Some of the cards contain photos of the students to replace those sent with the original autobiographies, and all are decorated with drawings. The text in the cards is similar to the computer messages, brief notes thanking John's students for being understanding about the delay of their autobiographies and special notes for individuals. Quirk does not write a card. Elise is the only student who writes more on her card than on the computer, sending a relatively long note of 61 words, (see Table 4.2):

> Dear Catherine,
>
> Hi! I hope by now you have recieved the computer mail I sent and my autobiography. But in case you didn't I enclosed a picture of myself (its an old picture). I hope things are O.K. with you! W/B (write back)
> Elise
> P.S. Do you like Henny the HEN? (She's the only thing I can draw)

A picture of Henny the Hen, labeled, is on the front of the card. Inside the card is Elise's picture, with an arrow coming from the photograph following by the word, "YUCK!"

Billy's is more typical:

Dear Class

How are you? We heard that you didn't get our autobiographies and we are very sorry. We got the folder you sent us but we have not opened it yet.

(Photo)

Sincerely
(signature)

(drawing of airplane labeled Futaba Radio Control)

At this point, Robin, her students, and the research team are concerned that the delay might endanger Robin's students' abilities to establish the personal connections they need so that they can foster a strong relationship with the British group.

No Response from England and Conclusions. Robin's class receives no response to their autobiographies, but as Figure 3.3 shows Christmas cards and short stories are mailed from England in time to arrive just after the Christmas break, but because of a British mailing delay the short stories do not arrive until March. By the time Robin's students write their apology notes in March, they are hungry for a connection with John's students that has not been established. Given Robin's students' strong desire to establish a personal connection with John's group and the lack of response to their notes and cards as well, their sense of John's students and their enthusiasm for the exchange is beginning to fade. By now, they are in the position of writing personal letter after personal letter to an audience that does not respond with personal letters. John is now fully focused on the exchange work that is yet to come while Robin is focused on trying to establish a personal link. The cross-purpose of the two classes is beginning to frustrate rather than support Robin's students efforts.

U.K. Christmas Cards

On January 4, Robin's class receives 21 Christmas cards from John's class. These are storebought greeting cards which John's students signed and sent. We have no information on how they were received.

Short Stories, Including U.K. *East Enders* Pieces

Robin says that she and John discussed exchanging a piece of creative writing, but she does not say that they decided specifically what the piece would be (Interview, May 25, 1988). John mentions short stories in his letters of November 24 and 30, and during Freedman's November 5 visit to John's class in England, she observed his students writing stories. These stories are completed in late December, but as we have indicated, due to the British mailing delay, they do not arrive until early March. The British stories are accompanied by six synopses of the British television drama series, *East Enders*, with descriptions of the characters, presumably written because Robin mentioned in a letter that the show had begun to air in the United States. Again John's students are trying to connect with something they think Robin's group will find interesting and that will expand their view, but without help, Robin's students are not interested; they want details of the British students' daily lives. Robin's students are reading this British work when Alex McLeod visits her class on March 10.

Immediately after the British stories arrive, Robin's students begins theirs. Robin writes in her journal, "Just received another package from John and it's their stories. We're really behind now" (March 7, 1988). Robin's students draft their stories on selected days during March and April and send them via computer in late April.

The Writing. The British stories contain extended dialogue and description, with character motivation and plot developed through several incidents. Of the 206 pages sent, the longest story is 32 pages and has 17 chapters. Ian's seven-page, densely handwritten short story, titled "Trouble," provides an example of the substantial nature of the British writing.

In "Trouble," Ian tells of two boys, Joe and Mick, who always seem to get in trouble. The narrator gives Mick's point of view, and tells about Mick's and Joe's return to school after the summer break. Mick has resolved to stay out of trouble this year, but Joe influences him to continue in his destructive ways. Ian's story explores Mick's conflicts with himself and his inability ultimately to resist Joe's influence on him.

Ian begins the story:

> Mick closed the door and went on his way to start the 3rd fresh year in school. He wondered what it would be like, will he get into trouble? Would he behave? Will he do his best to study? All this things were running through his mind and he was very worried. He was wondering if it will be like last year when he got himself into a right mess and in problems, just by showing off and thinking he was really tough and strong.
>
> He thought about last year, in his mind he saw all the bad things he's done in the past year, which he thought was really quick. It was wizzing through his mind. He can't break locks, he must not throw chairs around, he cannot be like that if he wanted a good future for himself. He just has to concentrate instead on, just showing off as his way of describing it. He must behave himself and be good, specially to a teacher, other wise he will have destroyed his own life. As he was walking he felt as if he is walking into a new world of his own, which he thinks will be completely different and good, but it was the same old world. He was approaching the school when Joe shouted at him and Mick felt very confident that his friend was beside him. He was another one of them who is also like Mick.
>
> "Hi Mick" said Joe.
> "Allright"
> "Yeah"
> "Well its back to school again, bull shit." said Joe.
> "Don't even talk about it, i'm already put up." replied Mick.
> "Anyway lets forget about it and just do what's best for us." suggested Joe.
> "Lets go and play soccer, we have got another 20 minutes to go yet." said Joe.

Once in class, Joe provokes Mick to misbehave. Mick expresses his disappointment in himself:

> The first day finished in dissapoinment for Mick and he had no hope of making the most of the study at school. And he wondered what he would do, then he got back in to his dream, and in his mind he saw him self doing well in school and passing his exams in the 4th year, and Joe was not with him, he had gone to another school. But this was not true, it was his dream.

Next Joe persuades Mick to seek revenge on a West Indian boy who, with a gang of his friends, had beaten up Joe and Mick. Mick hesitatingly joins Joe to gang up on the boy. The fight is interrupted by an old man:

> Then the old man looked down at the boy and saw he was unconcious and called the Ambulance and then he was taken to a hospital nearby.

> Next day Mick and Joe met at the school Gate, Mick looked worried after what had happen yesterday. After all his thinking of behaving well, but he let himself down and though it was only the first day at school, and thought he would get better, but the otherside of his brain was thinking wrong.

During school the next day, Mick continues to struggle with himself: "As Mick walked towards their classroom, he thought about how he was going to do today. Will it be the same as yesterday, if it is like that it would be a tradegy for him." Shortly thereafter Joe again tempts Mick to misbehave in class. The teacher confronts Mick and orders him out of class. When Mick resists, the teacher pulled Mick out of his seat, and Mick looses all self control. At this point, "Mick punched him [the teacher] hard in his stomach and the teacher fell on the ground. Now Mick actually realised what he had done. he had destroyed his life." Ian concludes the narrative:

> The teacher got up and said to the headmaster.
> "Exclude this boy."
> "Are you allright." said the headmaster.
>
> Then the headmaster phoned Micks parents and told them to come to school imediatley.
>
> Then Mick was taken to court and later was sentenced to prison for three months.
>
> Then after three months he came out of the prison and his parent were fined 500 and had to sign a form saying there son will not be violent in school.

As the length discrepancy in Table 4.1 suggests, the writing from Robin's class takes a radically different form and is created with a radically different process than that from John's class. Whereas John's students work on a single story across a couple of months, Robin's write a number of brief short stories and then select one to send. Although the entire story-writing project takes some time in Robin's class, the students spend only a day or two on the particular story that they choose to send. Robin explains that the stories are one of a number of writing exercises produced by each student and called "daily writing." Robin routinely uses these exercises to get her students started writing stories. For these "show not tell" exercises, she gives the students a sentence about which they have to write something specific. Related to the personal and everyday concerns of young adolescents, the sentence prompts include "she felt foolish at the dance," "he felt guilty cheating," "it didn't fit," and "it was hard to tell him." After receiving one of these prompts, her students write a paragraph, and the next day in class Robin reads about five of the paragraphs aloud for the class to critique. After writing five or six such pieces on separate days, the students usually select one to revise with the help of a peer response group. Robin says, "The idea behind the whole thing [the daily writing and revision] is to work with an editing partner or an editing pair and to do some close look at revision" (Interview, May 25, 1988). However, for these stories, Robin recalls:

> Because of the time constraints issue we didn't do as much with it as I've done in the past. A lot of kids took fairly rough stories and put them on the computer [to send to England]. They hadn't really gone through a lot of drafts. And traditionally they did but we were running behind. (Interview, May 25, 1988)

Before the March mailing date, Robin's students had written about three stories each, as well as one futuristic story. Without going through a redrafting process, she allowed them to select one of their overnight writings, the one they liked best, to send to England. As Robin recalls, "John had sent quite lengthy stories, and so, um, I was trying to bring . . . that type of writing to a close because we had some other things that we were doing" (Interview, May 25, 1988).

Given the time pressure she feels, Robin is also pleased to be able to send these stories over the now well-running computer link. Ironically, the computer set up also discourages sending longer pieces because the students do not have the time to type them in.

The writing from Robin's students is marked by brief setting and character descriptions, some dialogue, and one episode. Elise writes the longest and most elaborate story of any of Robin's focal students; but at 326 words, it is still far shorter than any of the British short stories and is half the length of her autobiography. It is also shorter than any of Robins' other students' autobiographies (see Table 4.2), but as Table 4.1 shows these short stories are the second longest pieces Robin's students send after the autobiographies.

Elise's story is entitled "It didn't fit." She writes a whimsical piece about her family taking too much luggage on vacation; when her parents could not fit the luggage and her brother into the rental car, they decided to leave her brother rather than some of the luggage. She concludes:

> After what seemed like an hour, and probably was, my mom, my dad, me, and ALL of our luggage was settled into the hot dusty car. Just as we were pulling away from the zone, somebody, I think it was my mother, noticed that Oscar was still standing on the curb. Quickly Dad pulled the car back to the curb and tried to sqeeze poor Oscar in. But try as we might, Oscar just wouldn't fit.
>
> My parents deliberated for about 30 seconds before they decided it would be safer for an 11 year old boy to stay at the airport for about an hour than it would be to leave our luggage there on the curb for any amount of time. So we drove off to the resort and left Oscar standing at the curb. Once we arrived at the resort we got so caught up in the fun and activities we completely forgot about Oscar until now just now which happened to be 2 days later. Ya think I should tell my parents?!?!!?

In contrast to how she writes her autobiography, Elise indicates that now she no longer thinks about her British audience as she describes how she writes her story:

> I was probably taking a shower, or sitting reading a book, or doing something that wasn't very interesting, so I had time to think. And I was probably thinking about, I don't remember exactly, I was probably thinking about the assignment and thinking what I could do. I came up with the ending idea. I probably wrote it down on a piece of paper so that I wouldn't forget it. And, then I um came up with the ideas that went around it. And then I started writing it, and as I write it, wrote it, I kind of, you know, made changes in my ideas. And then I had a first draft, and we turned in our first draft and got it back. And then I made corrections and then handed it in again. And then when I was typing it, I remember I even changed it a little as I was typing it. If things didn't make sense or if I thought to something better, the wording, I changed it then. So it is just kind of a process of changing stuff. So that's what I did. (Interview, May 26, 1988)

Elise says that her mom helps her generate ideas and proofread. About her mom's help, Elise continues:

> Even if I don't use her ideas exactly, they kind of lead me to think of something else, kind of like a chain reaction. She's like my thesaurus and my dictionary rolled into one. (Interview, May 26, 1988).

Elise reports in her first interview that if she had to choose one piece to send to England, she would send this story rather than her autobiography. In fact, at the end of the year, she says that this story is her best piece of writing of the year (Interview, June 6, 1988).

Equally pleased with her story is Bambi who enjoys writing stories and who decides to send the following story from among six that she had written:

> IT WAS DIFFICULT TO TELL HER
>
> My best friend walked into the classroom. Her long shiny, red curls bounced when she walked. Her determined face, freckles, and blue eyes made me giggle. Her tight black mini skirt covered part of her tan thighs. Her white tank top made her bright red hair stand out. She turned her perfect body around to look at me. All the guy's liked her except for the one she liked, Mike. He liked me. He asked me to go to the dance with him, not her. He thinks she is too conceited, and has too much of an attitude problem.
>
> At break, he said "Here's your ticket. See ya tonight, baby." Then I felt a quick kiss on my cheek. I heard a scream. My best friend was staring at me. She said, "What is going on here? He is mine, all mine."
>
> At that moment I did not know what to say or think. All that ran through my mind was the dance, Mike, and the kiss. All of a sudden, I felt a cold hard slap that quikly brought me back to the problem, how was I going to explain to my best friend that I was going to go with Mike to the dance, and possibly be his girlfriend?

Bambi says it took her only 15-20 minutes to write her story. She claims, "I did a good job, because I had the idea in my head, and my pencil was just gliding, and it made me feel good, and it was just really complete in description" (Interview, March 29, 1988). She judges her stories to be good when they have this quality of completeness of description. While writing, Bambi says:

> Basically I thought about it as a play, but I didn't write it as a play. But when I thought about it, I thought that they could have good description, and they could have a picture in their mind about what she looks like. (Interview, March 29, 1988)

Bambi is so confident about this story that she says,

> When I send it, I'll probably write a little note at the bottom saying, "This is one of my best pieces," or something like that. "I hope you like it as much as I do.
> From Bambi." A little message like that at the bottom of it. (Interview, March 29, 1988)

Bambi shared her story with some friends before she sent it. She says she showed it to them because "they're always interested in my writing" (Interview, May 10, 1988). In essence, Bambi has her own informal, self-selected writing group. She describes the kinds of response she gets from these friends:

> They say that it's a good piece, and then they, they tell me what they especially like about it, what they like, and then they dislike in it. Most of the time it's like what they don't like is um a sentence saying something like just doesn't mean anything, just something placed in the story that doesn't belong there. (Interview, May 10, 1988)

These friends help her choose which of her stories to send to England:

> I said I have to send a piece to England. Which one should I do, and I showed them all my writing, and they said, "Oh! this one." And . . . so I choose that one. (Interview, May 10, 1988)

If forced to send either her story or her autobiography, like Elise, Bambi would send her story because she thinks that her story is not boring and that her autobiography is.

Like the two girls, Billy also feels satisfied with his story, but when asked whether he would rather send his autobiography or his story, he selects his autobiography "cause it tells about me; and if they had the other one [the story], they wouldn't know anything about who was sending it or anything." Of the several stories Billy wrote, he sends his piece about the future because it is "already in final draft form and it was the best out of all of them." Billy likes this story best because "it had the most detail" (Interview, March 29, 1988). Taking three hours to complete his story, somewhat longer than Bambi's 15-20 minutes, Billy says, "It was the easiest thing to write about because I like space and future."

Billy's story about life on a space platform, an average day in the 21st century, begins:

> An average day in the twenty-first century would go like this. The first thing that you would do is to get out of your bed that has 697 adjustable heated positions and take a shower in a mistifier. Next, you would eat small processed squares of food that were never made out of real food, and had a shelf life of 50,000 years. You would use high radiation gama rays to cook these squares and eat them at all of your meals.

After briefly describing work at his computer terminal, Billy explains his leisure time: "After work, my family will watch re-runs and game shows on our 3 dimensional projection televison with stereo sound until it is time to sleep." He then concludes with his bedtime hour and the coda: "This is an average day on our space platform."

Unlike the others, Quirk is dissatisfied with his story, about which he says, "I didn't do it especially for the exchange" (Interview, May 10, 1988). He writes:

> He Felt Foolish At the Dance
>
> "I can't wait. I can't wait!"
>
> It was the afternoon before the dance and Willie Afume had just come home from school and was getting dressed up for the dance at school.
>
> Later...
>
> It was 6:30p.m.
>
> "I can't wait to show off this rad new dance! I'll be the coolest kid in the eighth grade. 45 minutes till the dance.
>
> "By Mom!"
>
> Willie stepped out the front door and started walking confidently down the block wearing his new designer shirt, jeans, and underpants. He walked slowly down 27 blocks to the school gate. Delayed by a stop at the 7-11 for a 3 Musketeer's bar, he arrived at the school gate at 7:03pm.
>
> "Right on time."
>
> He handed over his ticket and entered the open auditorium door. After 20 minutes the song he had been waiting for hit the loudspeakers. Willie got out on the dance floor and proceeded to explode into a burst of action, jumping all over the place. After a minute or two he stopped, expecting an awed crowed to be gathered arouned him. Instead he saw about 40 other people doing the same dance. Turning bright red he crept out the door and wasn't seen again that night.

Quirk evaluates this writing, "It was kind of like a preface to a story"; he later calls it a "rough draft" (Interview, May 10, 1988).

To conclude, the two girls enjoy writing fiction. Because they think what they produce is good, they think the British students would enjoy reading it. Although Billy is pleased with his story, Billy thinks the British students would be more interested in hearing something personal; even though he did not think about what they would like when he wrote his autobiography, he thinks they would like reading the autobiography better than his story. Quirk seems embarrassed by his story, especially in comparison to the stories from England and therefore would have preferred to send his autobiography rather than this story to John's class.

Reception of British Writing: Challenging U.S. Values. Most of Robin's students found the British stories difficult to read and long, and preferred the kinds of pieces they were producing. On the whole their comments were very general. Bambi, who was so confident that the British students would like her story, did not like those that came from England. She says, "When I read them, and it's like they just go on. . . . I mean I'm not trying to be rude but I thought it was really boring." She later comments, "He [Charlie] didn't make it interesting" (Interview, March 29, 1988).

Elise seems impressed with the length of the British stories:

> The stories or the one big story that they sent us, I mean was really big. Catherine's had seventeen chapters. I mean you know, each were about, you know, two pages each, but still, that makes a long story. And on average our stories were about two pages. Um, that was one of the major differences. (Interview, June 6, 1988)

Elise admits, "I've never written a seventeen-chapter story," but when asked if she thinks she would have difficulty writing that long a story, she replies:

> Not if I had a topic that I was interested in, or a character that I liked, but, and no time limit, kind of thing. The problem with me is I usually start stories and don't finish them. (Interview, June 6, 1988)

Finally, Elise shows her lack of motivation:

> I could do it if I tried, but I don't know if I'd be especially interested in it. (Interview, June 6, 1988)

Elise does wish her class had written something longer. In advising about future exchanges, she says:

> One of the things that I was kind of sorry that we didn't get to do was get a little book like they, well no, like the book that they just sent, you know, part of, about their town and stuff. I thought that would have been really interesting too. I think that maybe you should do, some little project. Maybe two big projects, and a couple little projects, cause if you, you have like you know, three really big projects for the entire year, I'm sure that I would be bored of it. (Interview, June 6, 1988)

But Elise warns that other students with short attention spans might not like her idea:

> I mean you'd get people that don't want to spend such a long time, and don't have a real attention span for that sort of thing. (Interview, June 6, 1988)

Quirk, who is critical of his own work, is also clearly impressed with the British offerings. After remarking in his March interview with the researchers that "all the stories from England are 10 or 15 pages long all the way up to like 30 pages," he concludes, "seems like they're giving us a lot more than we're giving them." In his last interview of the year, recalling the stories again, he remarks, "They were real good, and well written. They were big" (Interview, June 6, 1988).

Response from the U.S.: Evaluation and Correction. Robin's class's formal responses to the British stories are written on dittoed (duplicated) critique sheets. Unlike the letter form they use to write responses to the photo booklet and the autobiographies, these dittoed forms give the students no room for writing an in-depth response or for imparting a sense of the story's impact on them. The dittos seem to have been designed for formal peer response groups in

Robin's classroom. The following critique form written by Billy about Ian's story provides typical brief comments:

Strengths:	1.	good dialog
	2.	good plot
Weaknesses:	1.	too much dialog
	2.	Hard to follow

> One sentence I really liked in this paper was:
>
> > He thought about last year in his mind he saw all the bad things he's done in the past year.
>
> One suggestion I have for this paper is:
>
> > He shouldn't write siad Joe or said Mick as often as he did. The way he wrote it made it hard to follow.

It is interesting that all of Billy's remarks focus on the first page of Ian's text. Like the other students in Robin's class, Billy seems to be completing a teacher-assigned task in a perfunctory way.

Many of Robin's students, in responses that are themselves riddled with mistakes, criticize repetition, lack of development, choppy sentences and spelling. The students tend to praise description and dialogue. All but two British stories receive at least one such critique.

British Response: Evaluation. Functioning to close communication rather than keep it open, these critiques elicit from John's students polite letters of thank you and goodbye. John comments in an interview that his students sometimes found it hard to respond in a way they felt comfortable, and thus they did not respond to these critiques of their stories. Ironically, at this point the responses from Robin's students unintentionally undermine the personal connection they are so desperate to establish.

These responses come in computer mail from England on June 8. John's students first write these letters at their school and then Alex McLeod sends them by e-mail from the Institute of Education so that they will arrive before Albany closes for the summer. The Forest Gate students never use the computer themselves. In an interview with the British research team, John comments about his students' general responses to this U.S. writing:

> But then when the printouts came . . . initially there was an excitement . . . but then that very quickly changed to one of disappointment because I felt . . . it lost the person. . . . I think Nikita said "They're not there in this."

He continues, telling how difficult it was to get them to write these letters:

> It was hard you see because, because the lack of substance, not substance—the lack of variety. We tended to get paragraphs for chunks, chunks of writing. It was hard to get them to respond in a way that they felt comfortable with. (Interview, February 24, 1989)

In a few polite lines the student letters, functioning both as response to the short stories from Robin's class and as good-byes, thank Robin's students for their short stories, compliment individual writers on style and content, and then say goodbye:

> To Rhubarb
>
> When I read your story 'TWENTY YEARS FROM NOW' I really found it amusing. It was a good story. Please help me (on my behalf) to thank the rest of the class for all their work they've sent us. The exchange was good fun while it lasted.
>
> Thanks again from
> Delbert and Amelio

Another letter, this one from Dickens, captures the spirit of the rest:

> To: Ms Davis's class
> From: Dickens
>
> I liked your short stories. They were very good and they said quite a lot in a few lines. Overall I think our exchange has bee very good. It's given us a chance to see how other people work. It's also enabled us to make new friends. I've enjoyed it and it should be done again.
>
> Signed, for the last time—
> Dickens

Conclusions. The stories and the response to them vividly illustrate the cultural differences in these two classrooms. Besides the disparity in the lengths of the stories, the students in the two classrooms respond in very different ways to one another's work. Robin's students use the same response format that they use with one another in their classroom, a kind of response sheet that will be familiar to many teachers in the United States but to few British teachers or students. Since the exchange is a supplement to Robin's curriculum, it is natural that practices such as using response sheets would remain in place as her class grasps for ways to respond to the British work. Also, given that the exchange is not her sole writing curriculum, Robin has little time available to help her students read the lengthy stories that come from abroad. Without such help, the students have difficulty appreciating the British writing and consequently making social or academic connections with the students from abroad. While Robin's students hunger for a stronger personal connection, John's students are trying to make an intellectual connection; neither group is satisfied. At least in John's class the intellectual core of his instruction, although not stimulated by any interaction with Robin's students, goes on unimpeded. Through the students' writing one can see that they are using their imaginations in ways that help them engage with important social issues and that within their classroom they are making important social connections to their worlds. Without a personal base, they also seem to be using their distant and imagined audience as a reflector for their ideas.

U.S. Poems

Almost immediately after the large package of stories arrive from England, Robin's students send, in addition to their own stories on the computer, poems by computer mail. At this point the activities in the two classes no longer are similar. Robin's class has switched entirely to computer communication while John's class is working on large projects. According to Robin, her students write these poems because the school librarian, Linda Neilson, had read about the activity in Scholastic's *Voice* magazine and suggested that Robin's group do it. Robin agreed to the plan and had her students write the "poems" in class and then type them into the computer.

Included in the text sent to John with this assignment is an explanation of the assignment and a message from Linda and her husband Al, who helped establish routines for electronic mail. They write, "Following is a lesson that John might want to try with his class." The writing directions read, "Use the structure of the poem below and complete each beginning line with information that is appropriate for YOU." To write the first two lines of the poem the students have to finish the sentences "I am (two special characteristics that you have)/I wonder (something you are actually curious about)" etc. The instructions continue thus (I hear, I see, I want) for eighteen lines. The first and last lines of the poem, as well as the last line of each stanza, are to be the same.

The Writing. Each poem follows this structured format, with only minor deviations in line pattern. Billy's poem, which is missing a line, reads:

I am a skier who likes cars
I wonder about the stars and the sky
I hear people in space

I see a whale on mars
I want to win
I am a skier who likes cars

I pretend to fly off the ski jump to victory
I feel happy around my friends
I touch pizza, my favorite food
I worry that I will hurt myself skiing one day
I am a skier who likes cars

I understand that people should do their best
I say someday I will drive to victory
I dream of fine girls
I try to help people
I hope to be a scientist and kill germs
I am a skier who likes cars

The poems written by the other focal students are similar.

No Response from England and Conclusions. The British students do not respond to these poems either in writing to Robin's students or in their interviews.

U.K. School Book

John mentioned during his June 24, 1987 meeting with Robin that his exchange class from the previous year had done a school book project for Helen Ying's class. Although there is a precedent for the project, John and Robin do not discuss it in detail. John mentions it again in his letter of November 14, saying that his students are about to begin writing, interviewing, and doing maps for the project. John's November 14 letter indicates that he plans for his class to begin work on the school book in the winter. It arrives in Robin's class on April 19.

The Writing. The 119-page book contains photographs of the students in John's class, the school secretaries, the cooks, and the library. It includes a copy of the Forest Gate School rules, a written piece on form tutors and the "head of year," and a weekly schedule of classes. There is also an entry on the physical structure of the school, what classes there are, who teaches what, and uniforms. Following these general items about the school is a series of chapters on each subject taught at Forest Gate: English, "maths," science, P.E., history, geography, computer studies, home economics, art, social education, modern languages, religious studies, "craft, design and technology," and "options" or electives. Other final chapters cover such topics as community activities, trips, and a recounting of a bomb scare at the school.

Each of the central chapters on the different subject areas includes a piece of student writing on what the students learn in that class, the curriculum for the first three years, and how the author or authors feel about the class. Most chapters also include a transcribed interview with the teacher of the subject which seems to have been conducted following some standard set of questions.

The chapter about English is especially interesting since John is the teacher interviewed and since the writing and format is fairly typical. The cover page for the English section is illustrated by Jackson, with the interview of John and accompanying text by Dickens and Danny. The section also contains three photographs taken in the classroom, one with John and his two interviewers, with a caption by Dickens, and two others of students at their desks with captions by the students, Mattie and Delbert.

Dickens begins his chapter:

> English is a very big and varied subject at Forest Gate. It incorporates areas such as Literature, Writing and Drama. At Forest Gate, we have all of these as well as basic English. Our class has 3 lessons of english a week (a double-lesson and a lesson last period on Thursday afternoon). To help us find out more about English work, we had an interview with Mr. Hickman.

The five-page transcript of the interview follows. In the interview John discusses his teaching schedule, how he uses his time out of class, his history as a teacher, why he chooses to teach English, why he became a teacher, conditions in the schools and for teaching as a profession, and his participation in the exchange project. John reveals to his student interviewer: "'Freetime is most definitely spent working, just like lunchtime is normally spent working, just like three hours a night are spent working, and an hour and a half before school is spent working, yeah.'" About why he went into teaching, John says that he thought he "would be able to do something positive. And perhaps, show people different things about the world and, help them come to terms with themselves all those sorts of corny things." After the transcript of the interview, Dickens includes two and one half pages about Mr. Hickman and the curriculum in English across the first three years of secondary school (grades 6-8). This is followed by Danny's contribution, addressed "To Albany Middle School." Danny tells, from his point of view, what it is like to be an English student at Forest Gate.

Reception of British Writing: Little Time. Still working on their short stories and their responses to the British short stories when the Forest Gate book arrives, the students in Robin's class unfortunately take little time to read and no time to respond to this substantial British offering. When asked what happened in his class when the Forest Gate book arrived, Billy responds:

> Well, she [Robin] kind of told us about it, and then . . . we didn't see it for like a few weeks after she told us about it, so we were kind of like, let's see it, we want to see it, cause we didn't get very much stuff from them, only little things. So we were kind of anxious to see it. . . . She kept forgetting to show it, and we didn't have enough time. . . . She showed it to us at the end of the period, and then we had to go to foreign language. So we didn't get to really look at it and stuff. (Interview, June 6, 1988)

Billy reports that the rest of the class did have an opportunity to look at the book on another day, but he did not because he was absent. Although he never read the book, he reports that he did look at some of the sections. When asked what the sections say, Billy reports, "I don't know, she just displayed the title, real quick."

Elise is the only other focal student who has any comment about the book:

> We looked it over, but nobody really read it that much, like the interviews with the teachers, I know that most people didn't read. But we looked it over, especially at the pictures and little captions and stuff, to see what it was like. . . . I'm sure people read some of it, but we're not very interested about what their teachers do. I know that's awful to say. (Interview, June 6, 1988)

Conclusions. Once this second major piece of academic work arrives, following the short story anthology, John's radically different focus becomes apparent to Robin and her students. By this time it is too late for them to do anything about it, so in essence they begin ignoring or at best skimming over the work. This British writing clearly was intended by the British students to provide what they thought would be interesting information to Robin's class about their school lives. The work had clearly stimulated them to think deeply about and reflect on the organization of their own school and on their educations. They hoped for something in kind from the United States, so that they could compare their experiences with those of students in another part of the world and use those comparisons to reflect even more on their own lives. However, this potential for the exchange is frustrated by the cross purposes of these two classes.

U.K. Community Book

Like the school book, the community book is another project that John's previous exchange class had done. John did not mention it in his initial meeting with Robin, and he only writes of it in his letters as being in production. In his letter of April 19 John says that his class is in the middle of work on the community book. By this point, he no longer seems to expect Robin's class to be producing anything similar. The community book arrives in the United States on June 3, just a week before school closes for the year.

The Writing. The 183-page book is divided into three sections. The first includes detailed descriptions of each student's home, followed by a description of that student's daily journey to Forest Gate. The locations of students' homes are marked on an accompanying street map of the borough, as is the location of the school.

The second section reports on a class field trip to the Docklands, a dock area under renovation. This section of 60 pages contains a one to two-page contribution by 23 students in the class. There is also a supplement of photographs taken of the area. Describing the same class trip, many students offer redundant information, but each also provides the author's individual perspective. A comparison of Nikita's and Delbert's illustrates this point. Both give background about the trip itself—the date and the fact that the group was picked up at school by a "coach." However, Nikita stresses the plans for the renovation of the docklands which she learned about from a video that was shown during the field trip:

> We watched a video about the docklands it told us all about the new things they were building including a new shopping centre which will be exactley 900,000 square feet big which is alot bigger than Brent cross!!**, Inside the centre there will be lots of other shops also a child caring unit where you can leave your children while you shop in the centre. The docklands will also be providing alot more water-sports such as sailing, rowwing, wet bikes and speed boats.
> They will also be building alot more houses around the whole of the docklands area the houses are in all shapes and sizes, such as toy town, logo land, tudor and alot more, most

> of the houses are very small and I think very ugly. The old fashioned houses were alot bigger and prettier.

By contrast, Delbert mentions the video but writes primarily about something Nikita never mentions, a talk by Mr. Polish who tells the group about the history of the area:

> While we were having our refreshments, we were shown a video.
>
> In this video we were shown how the docks should look when everything is finished in the near future.
>
> They plan to build a big shopping centre, railway expresses, hotels, tourist sites e.t.c.
>
> When the video was over Mr Polish told us the plans of the corporation. Before that he gave us a little history about the docks. Here are some facts:
>
> 1. The eldest docks: St. Katherine's docks is the eldest and it was built to take expensive cargo.
>
> 2. When and Why the docks closed: The docks began to close in the mid-sixties and by the eighties all the docks had. The docks had to close because they were hardly used anymore. This was because faster, cheaper and safer ways had been found to transport the goods.

Delbert continues to unravel the history of the docks as told by Mr. Polish for another dense page and a half of text. Other students give sociological and economic background on the area, discuss the construction equipment, and the like.

The final section of the community book, co-authored by Catherine and Jane, includes a history of the Newham area. The first four pages consist of a timeline which begins:

B.C.	
3000	Bones, beads and weapons discovered indicate human habitation here by this time.
57	The trinovantes, a tribe of ancient Britons, who lived in Essex and Suffolk are known to have lived in the area.
A.D.	
43	The Roma Emperor, Claudius Caeser had a road built from Londen to Colchester. to-day this is Romford Road.
61	The Trinovates joined Queen Boadicea in her struggle against the Romans.

After continuing to the present day, they include two maps, one of West Ham and East Ham from 1886 and another of present day Newham. Next Jane describe "Witches in Forest Gate." She writes:

> . . . . In the 1700's people called Forest Gate the witches area. When night came people thought that witches used to chant over the flats and that is why they think that the group of trees over the flats are where the witches used to chant. a lot of people commented that the ring around the trees were where the witches chanted.

Catherine writes a paragraph on the depression of the 1920's and 1930's and another about West Ham Hall, which is now a school. They next include a ten-page section on the origin of the names of the roads in Newham. They end with photographs of local landmarks and accompanying explanatory captions and with a map showing where bombs fell during World War II.

No Reception of British Writing and Conclusions. Given their late arrival in the United States, during the last week of school, none of Robin's students read these elaborate books from England. This writing, then, has no impact on either their personal connections to their British audience or to what they learn about their own writing. Even if the book had not arrived so late, the cross purposes of these two classes would likely have gotten in the way of Robin's students' abilities to appreciate or make use of this writing.

U.K. London Walk (and Moslem Holiday Papers)

These papers about "our day's walk around London [We walked about 12-15 miles]" (Letter, Hickman to Davis, May 25, 1988) were intended to be part of the community book but were not completed in time to be mailed with it. About this writing, John explains to Robin:

> My kids have just scribbled down their impressions of the London Walk. There's been no drafting, no consultation, no planning—NOTHING!!
>
> We had to get them off to you so that they'd arrive before your term ends so please excuse the general tattiness. (Letter, May 27, 1988)

He also explains that a few of his students "who celebrated a muslim holidy—Eid—on the day of the walk, have written about that."

It is interesting to note that John especially enjoys taking his students on walking tours of the city. In the past John served as an official guide for London's walking tours, a popular activity for many tourists to London; for that position he had to become knowledgeable about the history of the city, learn many details about famous places, and show his ability to entertain and inform a group of diverse visitors.

Unfortunately, this exchange arrives too late for Robin's students to see them.

The Writing. The British students write, on average, two pages of densely packed prose about their extensive walk around London. They also send a set of 18 numbered pictures, showing them students in front of the places they visited. Each picture is mounted on a separate sheet of white paper and is accompanied by brief explanatory caption, like the following for the first picture: "Here are some of 3G standing in a very old alley that hasn't been changed for years and years. Don't we look lost!" Besides the pictures, they include a xeroxed street map, with their route drawn in red and with numbers written in that key to the numbers of the pictures and that show precisely where each was taken.

In one of the longer pieces of writing (almost five pages), Nikita, collaborating with Mattie, vividly recounts the Jack the Ripper story, with her title, "Jack the Ripper" in large and neat print and with the "i" in "Ripper" dotted with a red-inked tear of blood and with tears of blood dripping from the bottom of the other letters. Before embarking on this narrative she begins as most of her classmates do, telling about the logistics of a class trip of this sort but with a personal and engaging style:

> Just the thought of 3G going our on a trip creates havok.
>
> We started out, meeting Mr. Hickman and Miss Brady at the main gates and teh rest of the class but of course Miss Brady was late (all teachers are the same can't rely on any of them).

After giving some information about the train trip to Whitechapel station and the brief walk to Brady and then Durward Street, she begins her narrative:

> Durward St was the street where jack the ripper killed his first victim her name was Mary Nicols she was about 40-42 and she was a prostitute,
> she was found lying dead in the road with half of her throat ripped out and she had been stabbed in the chest several times,
> No one was really bothered about Mary being murdered it happened quiet alot and she was a prostitute and she had been wandering around the streets because she hadn't enought money to rent a bed for the night.
> But people started to worry after his second victim she was also a prostitute aged about 40 and her name was Annie Chapman and she was found in Hanburry St lying in a door way with her throat ripped out and serval stabes to her chest, this time people began to worry. there was a manic on the loose ready to kill his next victim, soon after Annie had been brutally murdered a small parcle was sent to the local police station and it contained one of Annies organs (heart, lungs things like that) and a note say from Jack the ripper it wasn't very pleasent and it was written in Annies blood.

Nikita continues with the story of Catherine, the third victim, and then Elizabeth, the fourth, and finally the last and worst attack of a 25-year-old. This time "the attack happened in her bedsit in Millers Court her throat had been ripped open and her body torn apart, here heart and lungs where hung around the room and there was blood everywhere."

After he Jack the Ripper section, Nikita moves on: "After the Gruesome Jack the ripper walk we went to the Guild Hall and looked around inside we saw models of London and maps." With less detail, she also describes a visit to the Barbican and to Whitechapel.

The three students who missed the trip and write about the Moslem holiday, Eid, that kept them away, seem similarly engaged in telling their experiences. As Ian explains, "On Tuesday 16th of May a London Walk was planned for all of the pupils in 3G. But it was EID for Muslim people on that day (Eid is a festival which is like Christmas)." Then Ian describes Eid and tells what he did. After praying at the mosque and having a festival dinner, he gets "money and presents." The family then visits relatives, and goes out "sometimes to the centre of London and enjoy ourselves."

Conclusions. Although certainly not perfect in spelling and punctuation, as John warns given the short time for this project, like Nikita, most of John's students seem engaged in this writing and include detailed narratives and explanations of their experiences.

U.S. Yosemite Booklet

On June 14 Robin's class sends their last writing, a photo booklet recording a class camping trip in Yosemite National Park. There seem to have been no negotiations between Robin and John concerning this project. The only mention of it anywhere is in an electronic mail message of May 6 from the research team in the United States to the team in England: "Robin's students are planning their trip to Yosemite, and I know will put together a photo booklet for John's class as their next project."

The Writing. Reminiscent of the first photo booklet of the school year but with more pages, this Yosemite booklet follows a similar format. It contains 40 pages of pictures, with accompanying captions of one to two sentences that name locations in the park or briefly identify students and activities photographed. One such caption reads, "Here we have two happy campers (Chip and Chuck) writing in their Journals. Notice the Redwood trees in the background."

U.S. District Writing Booklet

Along with the Yosemite Booklet, Robin encloses a copy of the District Writing Booklet, a compilation of poems and short stories written by students in the Albany School District in grades two through eight. The Booklet is supposed to function to encourage writing from reluctant writers.

The Writing. For this particular year, it contains 77 contributions from four schools, with a cover drawn by Quirk. Of the seven entries by seventh graders, two are written by Robin's students: one by Twiggy and another by Guy. Both are "I am" poems that had been sent to England before. The short stories in the District Booklet are mostly about 250 words, with only a couple approaching 500 words. Although just slightly more than the usual length of the stories Robin's seventh-grade focal students send to England, this 250 word norm also allows for little difference in the scope of the fiction writing from grade two to grade eight. However, it is interesting to note that one of the longer stories is written by a third grader.

U.S. Goodbye Computer Letters

Parallel to the British goodbye letters, which also contained responses to Robin's students' short stories, Robin's class typed short farewell messages onto the computer at the close of the school year.

The Writing. Five of the 25 students sending messages write a few lines among the letters expressing their disappointment that the exchange is over while one student says that the exchange was "starting to get boring." The other letters are standardly polite: they use such general adjectives as "enjoyable" and "interesting" to describe their experience and mention summer vacation plans, birthdays, and upcoming sports events. Some students include their summer addresses in hopes that outside the school context they might write personal letters to students from England.

U.S. Reflections on the Exchange: Not Sent

At the June 24, 1987 meeting with John, punctuated with several "if's" and "maybe's," Robin suggested that as the last activity her students could write up a sort of report on the exchange, including what they learned and the like. For this report they might interview other students from other classes and ask them how they view writing. They might also share the British writings with these other students and observe their response since the others would not know John's class but Robin's students would. John also made a suggestion of his own. He said that he might be able to establish a dialogue between his class and another class of his just one year younger. He could put these two classes together, put them in groups of four, and record what resulted.

John dropped this activity, but Robin's students completed a version of it but one they never sent to England. They began this last piece roughly as Robin described it in the interview. Robin called the assignment "Myself As a Writer" and had the students answer questions such as, "How do you see yourself as a writer? What are your strengths and weaknesses? Discuss the writing exchange. Include the parts you've enjoyed, the parts that could be improved." They never interviewed other students; in essence, the pieces serve as a final internal evaluation of the exchange year as well as provide their own sense of their progress as writers.

Most of Robin's students felt that their writing improved (19 out of 24 or 79%). Two said they had not improved and two said this year made no difference to them. Only one does not mention the topic of improvement. Of those who felt they improved, most attributed their improvement to the fact that they were now older and had more experience to draw upon (six of the 19) and/or to their expanded vocabularies (five of 19). Rhubarb remarks, "My vocabulary improved to make my writing less childlike." In a similar vein, Jenny says, "I think my stories have improved because I've gotten older and I'm able to make more sense and use better vocabulary." Three attributed their improvement to the exchange directly. Spaceman Spiff says, "This exchange has helped my writing a lot and these are the reasons why I have never before written to somebody who knows nothing about me or I about him. I have never before gathered up all this information about me." Other improvements the students mentioned include learning to add dialogue and description; growth of creativity; and learning from reading other older kids' writing. Many speak in generalities about their improvement and/or about improvements in grammar or syntax. For example, Twiggy answers, "Yes, my writing has improved a whole lot more because now I don't put as many AND's as I did before. I think its improved because my english has improved also."

Fifty four percent of Robin's students (13 out of 24) feel that their writing is better than the writing of the British students and/or that they are more motivated writers. Guy's response is typical: "I thought (trying to be as polite as possible) that our writing was better. It was more descriptive, ade more sence, to us, had better stories. We better used the English language. They may have had good stories but you couldn't tell because they misspelled everything and didn't put sentences together correctly." Lizzie remarks, "I think that our writing is right to the point, while theirs wanders in all directions and takes a while to get to the point." In the same vein, Tae says, "I would say that our class writes better (not more but better) stories and other papers. Maybe it's because here we seem to focus on descriptive writing, interesting papers, and trying to use things like 'magic words' and there they might place a higher priority on how much you get done and the length." According to Jenny, "Our writing seems to flow more and make more sense to us. Their writing seems choppy and doesn't make much sense at all." Six of Robin's students (20%) make no mention of the relative quality of their writing and the British writing; two feel that the writing of students in the two countries is equivalent. Three of Robin's students feel that the British students are better writers than they are. For example, Billy says, "The students of Forest Gate seem to be more motivated towards writing than we are so their pieces are more complex and imaginative than ours, like useing dialog. They deffenitly write more than us like their 'short stories' that were an average of 22 pages! Overall I think that all the kids at Forest Gate did more on the writing exchange than we did."

Many of Robin's students (16 out of 24 or 67%) make note of the fact that the British students wrote significantly longer pieces than they did. One student thought their own class wrote longer pieces and the other seven made no mention of length. As Tae notes and Lizzie implies, such extended writing is not part of Robin's students' experience and is not valued by most of them. Asheley makes the point quite emphatically, "But I like our style of writing better, their's is too long & not fast-paced enough." Similarly, Guy reports, "they write long and borning." Cow, who feels the U.S. students write better, feels some guilt about the longer writing from the U.K.: "They wrote tons more. I was getting rather sad that we seemed to be sending so little compared to them, and then when they didn't get our autobiographies I thought of how little they must have. And now, they send us a 50 page book filled with interviews, its getting pitiful."

Conclusions

With regard to the first research question, like Judy Logan in Chapter 3, Robin faces institutional constraints that impinge on her classroom teaching and her students' learning. These constraints are numerous and are detailed fully earlier in this chapter in the section, "Institutional Contexts." Briefly, as is the case for Judy, there are relatively few ways for Robin's significant outside professional activities to feed back into improving her school. By contrast, in England, many of John's out-of-class professional activities, like Kate's, are part of his regular school duties, serving directly to improve his school. Second, in the U.S., because the middle-school structure allows Robin, like Judy, to teach the same class for a block of several hours each day, Robin has more time than the average U.S. high school teacher to get to know her students, but also like Judy, Robin is expected to know her students academically in several subjects, a difficult task. And, like most U.S. teachers, Robin must help her class develop as writers within the constraints of a one-year time frame. The result for both Robin and Judy is that they have insufficient time to get to know all of their students' academic needs. By contrast, their British counterparts have time to get to know their students, teaching the same group across more than a year's time, with John keeping his exchange class for five years.

In the context of a school structure that provides relatively little support for getting to know each student's needs, Robin also is expected to teach a mixed-ability group. As the only U.S. teacher working in a mixed-ability setting, her exchange highlights just how difficult mixed-ability teaching is within a usual U.S. institutional context. Issues surrounding mixed-ability teaching and the classroom organizations that support such teaching begin to address the second research question, about similarities and differences in the classroom cultures in the two countries and then how those cultures foster student writing development.

In England, since the same teacher works with the same group of students across several years, mixed-ability teaching has been introduced into a system that is designed so that teachers can help each student develop. It also has been accompanied by theories of teaching and learning that have demanded shifts in classroom organization. In particular, the negotiated curriculum that Kate Chapman describes in the conclusion to Chapter 3 accompanied the shift in Great Britain to mixed-ability teaching. This curriculum and accompanying classroom organization focuses attention on individual students and their needs within the classroom community and in this way supports the diverse approaches needed for mixed-ability teaching.

Just as Kate negotiates with her students more fully than Judy, John promotes such negotiation more than Robin does. In his final reflections on the exchange, John, like Kate, discusses these differences. John bases his reflections not just on his experiences with the exchange but also on his observations during his two weeks of participation with 25 teachers in the Bay Area Writing Project's summer invitational program for outstanding teachers.

According to John, negotiation, "the sort of in word in British education," functions in his classroom much as Kate describes it functioning in hers in the conclusion to Chapter 3. John sees setting contexts that will motivate his students to use language, including writing, in a wide variety of ways as his main job as a teacher who promotes a negotiated curriculum:

> I see my job as to provide the right context within which language develops and takes place rather than someone who has in the back of their head a set of skills that has to be offered to the kids at any particular time. . . . The context could be a book or a movie that we share together. It could be something like uh designing, something like writing a book for a younger audience. Something like that.

Once a context is set, students can negotiate with him about which activities they will do. For example, some might conduct interviews, others might watch a video, others might write a story.

The point is that the activities can be negotiated, with different students choosing different ones. If a student does not want to do a particular type of writing or even to write at all, even though John thinks the student needs to practice that particular type of writing and even though he has set a context to motivate that writing, he allows the student to do a language activity that he or she is more interested in. Later on, John will try again to set another context which will motivate the student. And so it goes for all the students in the class. John does not worry if a student is not motivated at a particular point in time. He takes it as his responsibility to find another context that will provide more motivation.

Since he teaches the exchange class for five years, John thinks about motivation and student development across long stretches of time, relying on a spiral curriculum and using the types of writing on the GCSE as a guide for the kinds of writing experiences he will want his students to acquire across time (discursive, analytical, narrative, responding to texts):

> The GCSE has provided me with a range of types of writing. . . . And you can actually in a spiral curriculum you can bring those down from a fifth year example to the first year. Are we covering this range of writing? So what I am in the business of thinking is what context can I provide which will enhance their language development and provide options for the whole range of writing.

John notes that this kind of teaching is "learner-centered' but he distinguishes it from the learner-centered curriculum of the 60s: "I think it has a slightly harder edge to it because it's not all to do with personal creativity." Adding this "harder edge" is crucial for John. He considers a negotiated curriculum "a frame in which personal growth can take place, within which there are certain areas of negotiation." The negotiation that occurs in the U.S., John thinks, "goes on in much narrower parameters" than in Great Britain.

Even in the U.K. the notion of negotiation seems to work within narrower and wider parameters, depending on the classroom. John takes the notion further than Kate since, for him, the exchange itself was confining because it imposed an external structure around his teaching, "a set agenda." In that way the exchange interfered with his ability to negotiate with his students about the writing they would do. In particular, he found that if something especially interesting to his students came up, the boundaries of the exchange made it difficult for him to take the opportunity to extend that topic or area, giving it extra time and encouraging it to grow, possibly giving up something he already planned. Still, John says, "Within that framework [the exchange] . . . I did try to do the negotiation." For example, students veer from the exchange writing at times and follow leads within the "set agenda"; every student does not write on every exchange, and within a given exchange, students do different activities (some write about the London walk while others contribute other things to the community book).

During his time at the Bay Area Writing Project, given this framework for teaching, John was surprised by the U.S. teachers' presentations to one another about successful instructional activities: "They all seemed to be program models as to, you know, how you take it from me and you can go use it in your classroom . . . I couldn't do that cause I don't offer a program" (Interview, October 30, 1990). In fact, John finds it pointless even to keep files on teaching activities since new students play such a major part in shaping what the activities will be, how they will unfold.

Teaching by negotiation generally underlies the notion of mixed-ability teaching in the U.K. John emphasizes that in England since diverse students meet in the same classroom the teaching must be diverse, with different students and groups of students engaging in different activities at any given point in time:

> If you are taking on the kid's language and his or her culture, and all that as your priority, you start from different perspectives, and in a mixed ability classroom you can't actually expect everyone to do the same thing at the same time . . .

As British teachers plan their classroom activities, they take into account the interests and needs of individual children and groups of children. Activities planned for a whole group, like writing autobiography or stories, provide scope for individual students to find topics and events that really interest them. Teachers spend a generous amount of time talking to students about what they might choose to write, and by doing so frequently widen the range of choice. By contrast, John observed that most U.S. teachers he met did not seem to have this notion of diversity embedded in their ideas about teaching: "If you [in the U.S.] are focusing on a particular area or a particular type of writing, you seem to make all the kids do that type of writing at the same time." John understands that the U.S. teachers, within this frame, allow some variety to meet individual needs. The point is that teachers in the States plan their classrooms around the unit of the whole group and therefore plan group activities that they think everyone will like. Since groups of students at the same age and ability levels are likely to be similar from one school year to the next, U.S. teachers anticipate what will interest the group and plan their program accordingly.

Along with mixed ability teaching, or for that matter any teaching that involves diverse students, John does not see how a fixed program aimed at an idealized whole group or even a program with some individual variation built in, can be sufficient to meet the varying needs of a particular group of students. He plans his classroom around the unit of a particular classroom community, attending to the needs of the children within the community. He negotiates between his plans and the desires of his students, as often following their lead as his own. Such planning does not mean that each child has a different program of study, what John refers to as the "learner-centered" curriculum of the 1960s. That philosophy is untenable since it carries the implication that we should concern ourselves only with individuals. Most seriously, it devalues the role of the classroom culture and in particular the way discussions, activities, and frequently writing arise out of the interaction of students with each other and with their teacher.

Besides the negotiated curriculum, John's and Robin's classrooms differ along other dimensions. Whereas Judy and Kate work across several years to develop a relationship that allows them to coordinate the exchange comfortably and take advantage of its social and academic potentials, John and Robin struggle across one year's time with conflicting ideas and values, exacerbated in their exchange by mailing problems. The conflicts Robin and John experience point to other deep and interesting contrasts in the teaching and learning of writing in Great Britain and the United States.

The first conflict becomes apparent as we compare how Robin and John use the exchange in their teaching. Robin sees the exchange as a supplement to her teaching, one dependent on hearing from the foreign audience for its success. As she says,

> It was a chance to share . . . some writing with a different audience. It just never got off the ground, I don't think, maybe in the same kind of in depth and that . . . had to do, I think, with the time back and forth and the loosing of this and the, you know, there were so many little, in retrospect, so many little quirky things that happened, that just didn't help it at all. (Interview, November 28, 1990)

John, however, places the exchange at the core of his academic work, treating the social and academic as one as he defines social not as personal dialogues but as reflections on oneself and one's community that lead to engagement with one's work. His program is not dependent on response from Robin's group for its success. Illustrative of this tension, Robin indicates her own and her students' frustrations because they think that John's class stresses the academic work at the expense of the personal connections:

> When they [Robin's students] responded to the autobiographies [from England], they responded to a person in kind. But what happened is they never got anything back cause our autobiographies didn't get there. So, in the end, the kids didn't get as much personal response back. They were in hopes, up to the last minute, that they were going to hear from this person that they wrote to on their autobiography. . . . We never got back from John's class, "Dear Bambi." Now these connections were made, kind of casually on John's side from the, uh, Christmas cards that they got, or they had picked a name out, or they had read an autobiography. And if they had received so much as one word back, then that was their friend for life. And, you know, some of them read autobiographical snippets that they didn't particularly connect to, and then because they didn't receive anything back, they wrote to the class. (Interview, July 26, 1988)

Robin also notes that John's group worked on their long pieces of writing rather than on the shorter, personal pieces that she and her students wanted to receive:

> I think John had his kids going on so many other big projects that they never wrote little personal things back and forth. And that might have been because, you know, things got waylaid in the mail, and they were just off on something else. (Interview, July 26, 1988)

Robin, at least partially, blames the problems with the mails for making it so difficult to make the personal connections happen.

Since John and his students expect to learn about the States through serious and socially conscious academic offerings from Robin's students, they have no idea that Robin's group is depending on personal pieces to go back and forth. One of John's students, Dickens, indicates the conflicting British expectations. In his end-year interview Dickens reflects on the Yosemite book his class had just received and their reactions to it:

> Well when I first saw the thing you know, just sitting on Mr. Hickman's desk, I thought well at last we're going to get a very good clear picture of what America's like. But when we got it I was pretty disappointed.
>
> . . . .
>
> But I think the main drawback was it was mainly pictures. Like there was a big picture that covered about this much of the page and there was about five or six lines of writing. It said more about the people in the picture than the place itself, whereas when we went on the London walk, Mr. Hickman asked us specifically to write in detail about it so that they could get a good picture of London or wherever we go. But I don't think we got a very clear picture with their faces. (Interview, July 19, 1988)

Dickens is less interested in the "faces," that is in the individual students, than he is in learning about the place.

As Chapter 1 indicates, the exchange was not conceptualized to promote only personal ties or to be an add on to the curriculum. Rather the original idea was that it would provide a context in both countries in which teachers could promote engaging and extended project-like activities that would require students to think deeply and critically about themselves and their worlds. The cross-cultural component and the involvement of a peer audience was meant to support this effort as teachers used the distant audience to help embed the academic activities in the personal and social lives of the students. The autobiographies were to be the first of several extended projects. As Robin integrates the exchange into her classroom practices, it becomes an activity with only limited academic potential, in part because she has trouble establishing the personal connections to form the basis for the academic work and in part because given the world in which she and her students work, neither she nor they see the exchange as a way to foster in-depth kinds of writing. Robin reflects on the role the exchange played in her classroom:

> It was their [John's class's] entire English program. Whereas this was, it was supplemental . . . but yet part of it. . . . It wasn't a trivial thing. Because I think the kids became quite involved in it. And I do think they learned a lot culturally about the kids, and I thought there was lots of advantages to that part of it. But . . . we were just speaking on such different terms of interpretation of what we had said. And that's unfortunate. And I think that would have to be, to do an exchange again all those things I think would have to be clearly laid out. (Interview, November 28, 1990)

In the United States the goals of the exchange were intended to be consistent with calls for needed reforms in education (e.g., Boyer, 1983; Goodlad, 1984; Sizer, 1984), with some educational settings farther along in implementing such reforms than others. Through this exchange we see that for new kinds of writing activities to thrive, new institutional structures and changed social expectations about what writing is, what it is for, and how it will be integrated with the rest of the curriculum will be necessary. As Chapter 3 illustrates, such expectations are at the core of the "gifted" program that Judy runs, but they are distant from usual concepts of writing and schooling in the United States. By contrast, in England such expectations are not reserved for the "gifted" and are consistent with the actual practices of teachers like John who are leaders in the profession. Thus, while little change was necessary for John to get his students to do the kind of writing the exchange was attempting to promote, a great deal would have been required of Robin. Robin says that her group could have done more extended kinds of writing for the exchange had she understood what John's students were producing, but extended pieces would have come at the expense of variety in their writing and at the expense of other parts of the curriculum. Robin explains the class's preparation for the Yosemite trip and their resulting booklet as an example:

> Before the kids go to Yosemite, for instance, they do a whole study on the geology of the area and the history of the area and . . . there's quite a bit involved. And then it's basically when they get there, it's the culmination of the activity, so they're walking and keeping journals and things of that nature, but at that point it's, they're to take in the scenery, I guess, would be the best way to say it. But they could have done something like that. Had I known that it was to be a piece, you know we could have been doing ongoing things about writing up the history of the valley and the the stages and and done some things that had been there. But then you see the ultimate problem with that is the time constraints because, you know, you're trying to get, in the meantime you're teaching this that and the other.

Robin's students vividly point up the contrasts and value conflicts between her class and John's. As they began to discuss their cultures, they indicate generally that they prefer the scope of the writing they do in their own country and think it qualitatively "better" than what comes from abroad. However, a few of Robin's students began to realize the consequences of the cross-cultural differences they observed both for students in the United States and for American education. Although certainly a minority voice, Bruno writes the most eloquent analysis in his end-year reflection:

> I really enjoyed the exchange, I think it's neat exchanging letters with a class in England. It was fun reading their letters and finding out what life is like in England. I liked comparing the two cultures and their different styles of writing. I think it's nice that the class in England wasn't all caught up in grammar and punctuation. I think it enabled them to think more freely, and therefore come up with better stories. I think that the kids in England are encouraged to write more and I think they enjoy writing more than American kids.

Robin and her students by no means provide an isolated example with the brief pieces of writing they send for the exchange. In fact, the latest surveys from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (1990) indicate that Robin's students write much more than most U.S. eighth and twelfth graders:

> The amount of writing that eighth- and twelfth-grade students reported doing for English class was limited. Less than two-thirds of the students in either grade reported they were asked to write one or two paragraphs at least once a week, and only one-third reported writing one or two page papers this often. Just 14 percent of the eighth graders and 9 percent of the twelfth graders reported being asked to write a paper of three or more pages on a weekly basis. (p. 7)

Robin's approach also is consistent with national norms for outstanding teachers of writing (Freedman, 1987). At the secondary level (grades 7-12) Freedman finds that only 13.1% of the teachers reported that their students were writing something longer than four pages, compared to 3.6% of the usual secondary teachers (grades 9-12) that Applebee (1981) surveyed, a statistically significant difference ($p < .001$) (pp. 26-27). These statistics indicate that students in the United States rarely work on extended or project-like writing in any instructional program. The District Writing Booklet provides strong local evidence that Robin is working well within her school district's norms. What becomes clear through the comparison is that middle schoolers can write much more extended pieces than the ones Robin's students produce (Although John's class was a year older than Robin's, the equivalent of U.S. grade 8, this one-year age difference does not seem sufficient to account for the extent of the discrepancies we observed).

If Robin's students recommended any changes in the exchange, they wished that had spent more time on it. In their end-year reflections, Lizzie advises Robin, "I think you should continue the writing exchange but you should spend more time on it, so you comunicate with each other more." Cristine agrees, "I don't think we spent enough time on it." The two teachers do seem to spend different amounts of time on exchange writing, as it becomes John's entire writing curriculum and a supplement to Robin's. One of Robin's students, Kathy, comments on this difference between the two classes: "This year it seemed like that [the exchange] was all they [the British class] worked on, and we only did it when there wasn't something else to do." Although Kathy sees the exchange as more peripheral than Robin does, Robin herself makes it clear that the exchange is something she does alongside, not as a substitute for, other important teaching and learning activities, with extended projects more typical in her social studies curriculum than in English.

CHAPTER 5—SUSAN REED AND IRENE ROBERTSON

General Background

The Teachers, Their Schools, and Their Classes

The Teachers

Susan Reed. Having taught at the secondary level for fourteen years, Susan is at De Anza High School in Richmond, California. She received her B.A. in English from the University of California at Berkeley, was recently named a mentor teacher through the state of California's mentor teacher program for the second year in a row. At the time of the exchange she was head of her English department, a job for which she received no extra salary. Susan regularly publishes her own writing in professional journals. In 1988 Susan received an award from the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) for writing the best article of the year in *English Journal*, the main NCTE publication for secondary English teachers. Her article, "Logs: Keeping an Open Mind," describes how she uses ungraded reading logs to help students generate ideas and topics for papers and to help them think for themselves rather than "fill in the blanks of the teacher's thinking" (p. 52). Susan is an active Bay Area Writing Project (BAWP) teacher consultant, who after the exchange year, was selected by BAWP to lead a group of local teachers interested in doing classroom research. Also, along with some of her De Anza colleagues, she organized a cadre of writing coaches, juniors and seniors who could guide and assist freshman and sophomore writers. The coaches, called "The Write Team," in groups of ten or more, go into classes to help students with drafts of their writing before the teacher evaluates them. Besides this oral response, The Write Team provides written comments on drafts and helps with editing.

When we were looking for a new ninth-grade teacher to join the exchange project in its second year, Susan was an ideal candidate. Audience and honest writing were already well-established priorities in Susan's teaching. In fact, she believed strongly that multiple audiences were important for her student writers. Across the exchange year, Susan noted with pleasure the several audience "layers" in her class: herself, the British students and teacher, her student teacher, the other students in the class itself, and The Write Team.

Susan teaches 150 students and five classes a day, two basic ninth-grade writing classes, two eleventh-grade honors classes, and one class for The Write Team. She also sacrifices her conference period to an extra section for members of The Write Team who have scheduling conflicts with the regular Write Team class period.

Irene Robertson. Like Susan, Irene, who teaches at Gladesmore School, is the only British teacher new to the exchange, making Susan and Irene the only pair in which neither member participated in the first-year exchange. Head of the Communications Department at Gladesmore for the past three years, she previously held a similar post in another London school. As head of Communications, Irene is responsible for all language teaching as well as English. Gladesmore offers French, Greek, Turkish, and Gujerati and plans to introduce Bengali if there is a student demand and available staff. Irene interrupted her teaching career in 1971-72 to take a full time B.A. Honors degree in Sociology at Goldsmiths' College, University of London.

Irene has been active in policy making in English teaching for many years. She is well-known for her contributions to conferences and for her publications. From 1975 to 1978 Irene worked full-time for the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) Oracy Project. That project found examples of good practice in secondary schools, of learning by talking in small groups. Irene is an important contributor to *How Talking Is Learning* edited by Rachael Farrar and John Richmond and published by ILEA Learning Materials Service in 1982. She was appointed to a British Schools Council project in 1978 and from that work published with Methuen *Language* *across the Curriculum: Four Case Studies* in 1980. Irene was elected Chair of London Association for the Teaching of English (LATE) in 1986, a post she held for two years.

Irene has just as heavy a load as Susan. Besides serving as head of communications, she teaches four classes a day. As communications head, she is responsible for the curriculum in English, and also in other languages, in collaboration with teachers of those subjects. She is in charge of staffing the faculty, with particular responsibility for new members of staff. She also must organize support for ESL students, all of whom are integrated into regular classes. Besides the exchange class, she taught a first year group, a second year group, and a fifth form class which was the first age cohort taking the new General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) examination. (Appendix 1 provides details on the examination and examination class.)

Their Schools

De Anza High School. De Anza High School, with a student population of about 1500, is located in El Sobrante, a working-class area on the outskirts of Richmond and on the eastern edge of San Pablo Bay, a northern extension of the San Francisco Bay. De Anza is nestled in a lowland area between rolling hills that stretch down to the water. Verdant shrubs, ivy-covered walls and fences, and numerous fragrant eucalyptus and pine provide an attractive setting for its stucco buildings. The school was built in 1954 but is badly in need of fresh paint and repair. Recreational and athletic fields occupy no less than half the school grounds, while temporary classrooms, common to California schools, line the perimeter of the permanent buildings. Susan has taught for the last few years in one of these temporary classrooms.

For a number of years locals have not considered De Anza among the best area high schools, but the current, forward-looking administration is attempting to improve the school's image. In an October 5, 1987 letter to the *West County Times*, a local newspaper, De Anza student Lisa Stokes tries to correct community misperceptions about her school and to represent the school's efforts to change those perceptions. She writes,

> De Anza is a good school and deserves to be recognized as one of the best schools in West County. Despite our new accomplishments, such as the improvement of our academic status, the work on beautifying our school, the completion of our new student store, our fantastic spirit, and our tremendous athletic teams, De Anza has been portrayed as one of the worst schools in the Richmond Unified School District. We are tolerant, but enough is enough.

On November 15, the *West County Times* published a feature article entitled, "Letters to London Get English Class Involved in Study" (Appendix 5).

Since other schools in the De Anza district had enjoyed university attention and resources from the SUPER project (e.g., Robin's Albany Middle in Chapter 4 and Joan Cone's El Cerrito to come in Chapter 6), De Anza administrators were enthusiastic about participating in the exchange project. They were anxious for their school to have a turn at a school-university partnership. Furthermore, the school administration clearly values Susan's successful work and supports her participation in special projects of interest to her. From the start of the exchange year, this administrative support was clearly visible to the research team. The principal, at his initiation, visited Susan's class to talk about his experiences in England; his office donated pencils and other souvenirs for the De Anza students to send to the students in England; the administration purchased a computer and modem for Susan's class and installed a telephone line so that De Anza students could send computer mail to England; one of the vice principals, who knew how to use the modem, helped Susan get started.

Susan's classroom, in a portable classroom next to the main school building, is reasonably spacious (see Figure 5.1). The room is light and cheerful. A display of student writing and pictures of students from England covers one bulletin board that is close to the students' seats and that they frequently gravitate toward. Her students sit around small tables in groups of two to four, with a couple of students choosing to sit alone. This seating arrangement is more typical of classrooms in England than in the United States. Susan uses these table groups as small working groups, encouraging a closeness among students at the same table. Students seem to have self-selected their table placement. The computer is housed in a small storage room in the back of the classroom.

Gladesmore Community School. Gladesmore Community School, where Irene teaches, is in Haringey. In fact, Gladesmore is in the Tottenham area and is just two miles south of Northumberland Park where Kate Chapman (Chapter 3) teaches.[1] Being near Northumberland Park, Gladesmore is also neighbor to many of the same housing estates, including Broadwater Farm, the site of riots between the police and the black communities. Near Gladesmore is a busy commercial district consisting mainly of shops. Diverse communities surround Gladesmore, consisting of many religious, ethnic, and linguistic groups. For example, Muslims, who may number as many as one third of the school, include students whose parents came from Bangladesh, from Turkey, and who were Turkish people from Cyprus.

Gladesmore School is housed in four separate buildings. The original Gladesmore, built about 1900, is no longer in use. The two oldest working buildings were constructed in the 1960s, and there are newer science and sports buildings. Overall Gladesmore is more modern and cheerful looking than most London-area secondary schools. There is no grass on the school grounds, only a few small flower beds; but adjoining the school is a large public park with playing fields, and beyond that the River Lea, a tributary of the Thames; a canal; a railway; and low-lying marsh land. On its other three sides the school is surrounded by streets entirely filled by two story terrace houses, mainly owner-occupied. Many of the students live in these streets, but some come from other parts of the borough by bus. Gladesmore has about 900 students, with more males than females, possibly because two popular all-girls secondary schools are not far away.

Like Forest Gate (see Chapter 4), Gladesmore has the special status of being a "community school." Gladesmore has forged links with the communities it serves, first of all, by designing its curriculum to take into account the particular needs, insofar as they can be articulated, of the local communities. Because of the linguistic diversity of these communities, Gladesmore recognizes, values, and teaches community languages. Besides designing the curriculum to account for the communities, Gladesmore has representatives among its School Governors (like the School Board in the U.S.) from several surrounding ethnic communities, with the chair, Surinder Atarawala, a Sikh. As a community school, Gladesmore maintains a large community building, open all day and also in the evenings when the main school buildings are used as well. There are some classes in the daytime and a large number in the evenings. The community school also provides meeting rooms for local groups, including space for a day nursery run by parents. And it serves as the meeting place for a very popular youth club, not restricted to current school students.

Gladesmore is proud of its ability to retain students in school, keeping many into the sixth form. The whole organization of the sixth form is geared towards meeting the diverse needs of the students at Gladesmore. The school provides generous career advice and placement, helps students find the most appropriate college, and gives them the kind of support which will help them to study successfully in college. Some students go on the local Further Education Colleges (equivalent to Community Colleges); others go to Polytechnics (there are several of these

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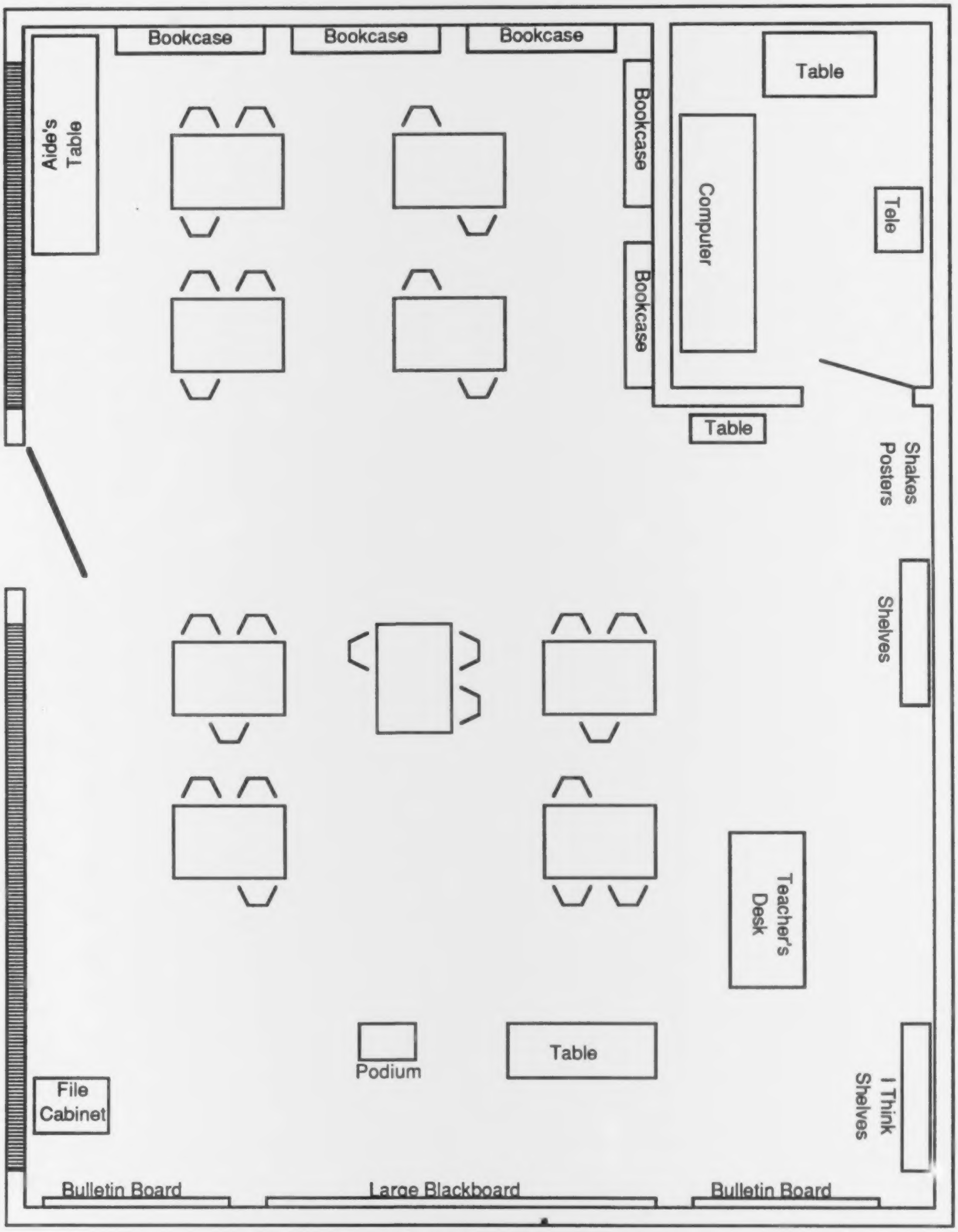
[1] A complete description of the Haringey borough has been included in Chapter 3 since Kate Chapman's school is in the same borough.

Figure 5.1: Susan Reed's Classroom


Bookcase
Bookcase
Bookcase
Aide's Table
Windows
Bookcase
Bookcase
Computer
Table
Tele
Table
Shakes Posters
Shelves
Windows
Teacher's Desk
Podium
Table
File Cabinet
I Think Shelves
Bulletin Board
Large Blackboard
Bulletin Board

Posters of American Writers (along wall near top) vocational schools near enough for them to continue to live at home if they wish); and others go to university.

Irene's classroom is on the third and top floor of her building. It is one of a suite where all English teaching is undertaken. On the floor is a department faculty room, an office, and two of the school's three computer centers—rooms with about 15 networked computers and managed by a computer studies specialist teacher. Irene's room is spacious, carpeted, and light, with many windows (see Figure 5.2). Inside the classroom, students sit around small tables, arranged for groups which may vary from two or three to six or seven students, according to the activity of the day. Two large portable room dividers allow groups of students to be moved into a separate area if Irene wishes. When Freedman visited Irene's room, these dividers doubled as bulletin boards and featured a display of writing that had recently arrived from Susan's class. Views from the windows span the park and sports fields, with trees and the river Lea in the distance.

Their Classes

Susan began the year with 27 students in her ninth-grade class, a small group by U.S. standards. Susan's class was the lowest track in the school and was plagued by problems of student attrition and high absenteeism typical in such classes. Five of the original 27 students had left Susan's class by March (one was transferred to a special education reading class; one dropped out; one moved to another city; and two transferred to another high school in the district), and three new students had enrolled, placing the March enrollment at 25. One of these new March enrollees was in Susan's class for a brief time in the fall before leaving for another school. Soon after this student returned in March, she transferred to a continuation high school where she finished the school year in a special program for expectant mothers. In addition, after the March counts another student transferred to a continuation high school because he was having trouble with drugs and cutting school, but then later in the year he returned to Susan's class.

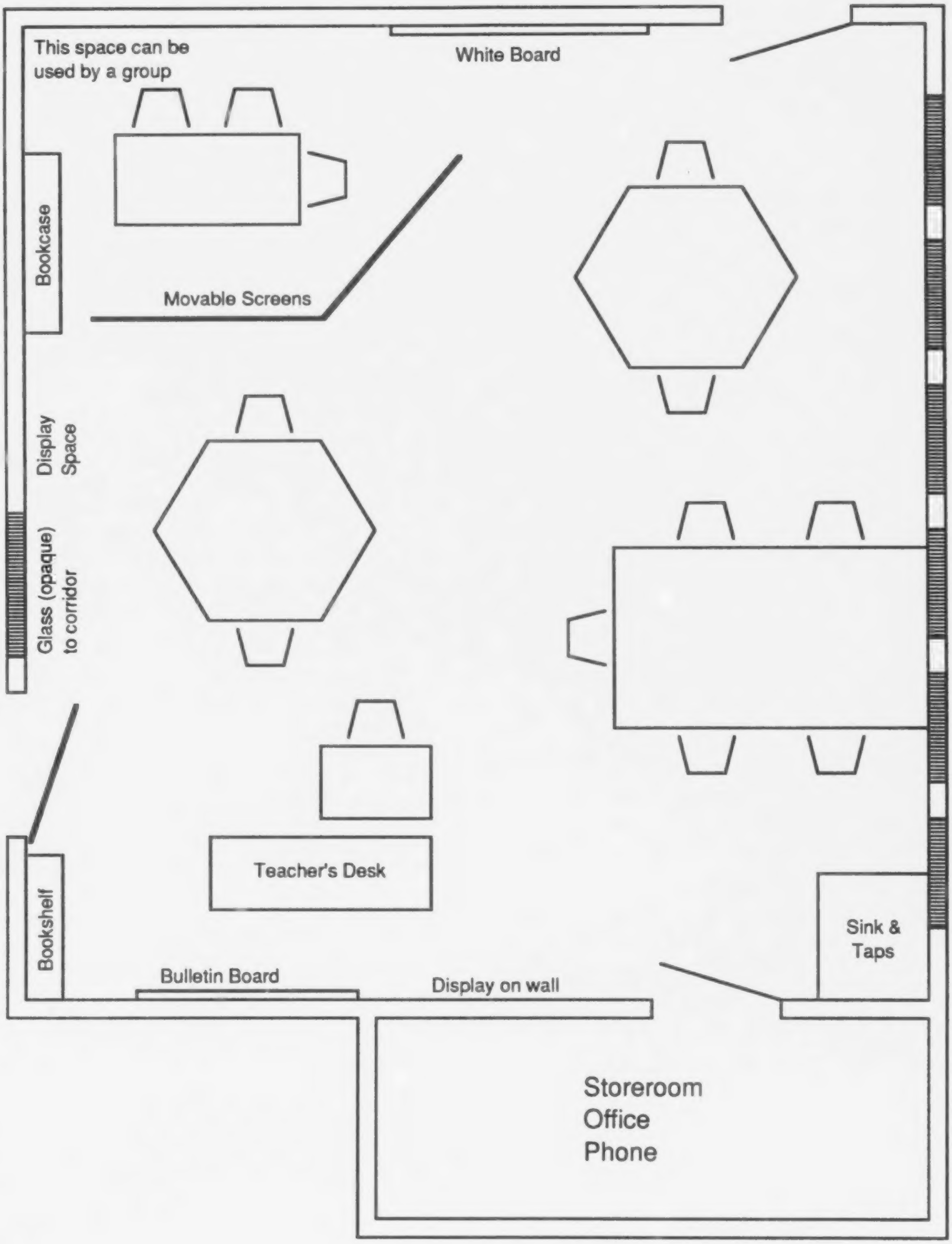
As Table 2.2 shows, the ethnic composition of the exchange class is fairly close to the schools' ethnic composition. In Susan's class, 37% are African American (10 students), 15% Chicano/Latino (4 students), and 48% (13 students) non-Hispanic white; according to the 1988 school district statistics, in the school 30% are African American, 10% other minorities but mostly Chicano/Latino, and 60% other white.

Irene's class of 17 fourth year students, like all the British groups, is mixed ability. With relatively stable attendance patterns and a stable enrollment across the year, there are 10 males and 7 females. According to Table 2.2, 53% are African Caribbean (9 students, with one one born in Jamaica and the rest born in London), 18% from the Mediterranean (3 students from Greek families that came from Cyprus), and 29% other white (5 students). Irene's group also reflects the schools' makeup, except that the school contains a number of Bengali and Turkish students, and there are none in her group. Irene was in her first year of teaching this class, but will keep them for at least one more year, until they take their GCSE examinations.

Comparing Institutional Contexts

As with the case reports in the previous two chapters, a synthesis of the background data for these two exchange classes provides preliminary information for addressing the first research question about the institutional supports and constraints on the teaching and learning of writing in the United States and the United Kingdom. The salient differences in the greater instructional contexts will be discussed in this section and will be paralleled to the discussion in the previous cases. They include the following: (a) like Kate and Judy and Robin and John, Susan and Irene are active professionally and take on added professional roles, with Susan's roles, like the other U.S. teachers', less well-integrated in the daily life of her school than many of Irene's; (b) both Susan and Irene assume external duties that have no equivalent in the other's country; (c) the

Figure 5.2: Irene Robertson's Classroom


This space can be used by a group
White Board
Bookcase
Movable Screens
Windows
Display Space
Glass (opaque) to corridor
Windows
Teacher's Desk
Bookshelf
Sink & Taps
Bulletin Board
Display on wall
Storeroom
Office
Phone

different teaching schedules and school organizations support the teachers in different ways as they get to know their students as individuals; (d) Susan teaches a low-tracked class in a tracked system while Irene teaches students of mixed abilities; and (e) Irene teaches the first year of the GCSE examination course.

Teachers' Professional Roles: Separated or Integrated

Both Susan and Irene have many responsibilities beyond their classroom teaching, with many of Irene's well-integrated with her school but with others more separate. Like the other British teachers, Irene has opportunities to participate in significant school-based professional activities that directly affect her school and that are part of her job as head of communications. Being in charge of all language teaching, she acts as lead teacher for a many members of the Gladesmore faculty, supervises probationers, and organizes support for non-native speakers to help them in their regular classes.[2] For these activities, Irene receives compensation and recognition by her peers at her school. Like Kate and John, Irene is active in LATE, having even served as chair of the organization. Susan too is department chair, but she receives no compensation and little recognition. As a volunteer chair, Susan has little time to take on the kind of responsibilities Irene does. In her role as a classroom teacher, Susan also initiates distinctive activities at her school, such as her work with the Write Team, but again she receives no special title or compensation for this work, in essence yet again volunteering her leadership. Like Robin, her work with the Bay Area Writing Project gives her local status outside her school, with these workshops being for extra pay and often taking her away from her regular teaching duties.

As is the case for John Hickman, both Susan and Irene do a significant amount of writing for teacher audiences. For neither teacher is writing part of their job, but instead it is a professional activity beyond the school bounds. Susan's writing comes directly from her experiences as a classroom teacher; she explains activities she has pioneered, the Logs and The Write Team, giving enough detail to get others started in trying similar activities. She also writes about her experiences with this exchange project, having published a piece on her research associated with the project in *The Quarterly* (Reed, 1989) and having presented papers at the annual meetings of the National Council of Teachers of English and the American Educational Research Association. Although Irene's writing is based on her classroom experiences, the book on talking and learning is written in the context of a city-wide project that synthesizes what teachers know on varied themes and across varied school contexts. Similarly, the book on language across the curriculum was produced through her work on a national project.

New Professional Roles

Like the other British teachers, Irene assumes a number of roles unknown to teachers in the United States. Like John and Kate, she works with probationers. Since there is not a special category for first-year teachers in the States, no one is in charge of supporting them although they may be subject to extra evaluation. At most schools in the states staffing is done by administrators. Also, little if any ongoing time is allocated to the school staff for curriculum development beyond text-book selection, although periodically committees are formed, usually at the district and state levels, that include teachers in making major curricular changes. Finally, rarely in U.S. schools are English, foreign languages, and ESL grouped together. Also ESL support is not normally coordinated with regular classes; instead special ESL classes are given for non-native speakers. Similarly, as noted in Chapter 4, in England the Writing Project does not have teachers assume the in-service role of "teacher expert."

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[2] In England most ESL teaching is done through a system of supporting students with individualized help as they participate in regular classes; beyond their initial entry, there are not special classes in English for non-native speakers (see McKay & Freedman, in press).

Getting to Know Students: School and Curricular Organization

At Susan's large secondary school, English teachers normally keep a class of students for one year only. Meanwhile, Irene meets her students for the first time during the exchange year as they begin their examination course, but as part of the usual school routine, she will keep them for another year to complete the course.

Also helpful in getting to know students is Gladesmore's special status as a community school. As families from diverse backgrounds gather routinely at the school site for many activities, the school promotes a close and family-like atmosphere for the students. Gladesmore has found that this community orientation helps with some of the drop out and attendance problems Susan experiences.

Tracked Versus Heterogeneous Learning Communities

Irene's school has a tradition of mixed-ability teaching, and her exchange class is mixed ability. By contrast, Susan's class is the lowest track in the school. It consists of a group of ninth-graders who have had a long history of school failure, who are generally disaffected, and for whom the system has few expectations. The students play out their roles, with their erratic attendance patterns and their high attrition rate. All together in one group, these students form a peer culture that supports one another's counterproductive behavior. Susan, however, expects her students to learn and does her best to teach them within the context of a system that provides her with an insufficient institutional structure.

Teaching an Examination Class

Irene's fourth form or ninth-grade equivalent class is in their first of two years of preparing for their GCSE examination, something that has major effects on the exchange activities in her class. As Appendix 1 explains, this examination is new, with Irene's class part of only the second cohort to take it. At first, Irene thought it would be possible to combine the exchange with the preparation of the coursework folder. Events during the year forced her to modify this view, as will become evident in the sections that follow. As Appendix 1 explains, British students must take the GCSE in order to receive the equivalent of a U.S. high school diploma; if they receive high scores, they may go into a two-year A level course (General Certificate of Education at Advanced Level, known as A levels). The A level courses qualify students for entry to universities and other forms of higher education. Also some employers demand A levels. Over 60% of British students do not take A levels but instead leave school at 16+, after taking the GCSE examination. Some also stay for one year in the lower sixth form either to try to improve their performance in the GCSE or to complete one-year courses which have a strong vocational bias, for example the Certificate of Pre-Vocational Education. Of those who leave school at 16+ some attend Colleges of Further Education where they may take GCSE's again or vocational courses or A levels. Thus, when the British students or their teachers have difficulty combining the exchange and the GCSE examiner audiences, because of these high stakes, the examiner audience necessarily takes priority.

The U.S. Focal Students

In Susan's class we focus on four students who were selected to represent the regularly attending students and the ethnic range in the class: two males, D.M. and Mark, one African American and one half Filipino and part Chicano; and two females, Lisa and Jessica, one white and one half black and half Japanese.

D.M.

D.M., the second oldest of five children, has two brothers and two sisters. Born in Louisiana, and named after his maternal grandfather who has a French Cajun name, he has lived in California since he was three. He is part of a group of black males who love "rap" music. He also writes in his autobiography, "my interest is playing football and baseball" and then devotes the whole of his autobiography to a description of his most triumphant home run. D.M. now lives with his father and stepmother whom he admires for her success in the business world. In fact, D.M. reveals in his March 25 interview, "I will try to do accounting like my stepmother is. You know, take after her. Um, you know, just try to succeed. Have my own company." At another point in this interview, he discusses his writing:

> I like to write about adventure stories. . . . before I retire. Take some time and write a novel on adventure. Um, I haven't really thought about my character, who will it—who will it *be*, but I'm figuring it out.

According to Susan, D.M. is inhibited in his school work because he fears failure. She finds him extremely sensitive and notes in her last interview:

> He's not conscious of it [being sensitive]. And of course most teachers wouldn't be either because he's frustrating. He doesn't meet deadlines. He's not organized.

His fear of failure seems to lead him to delay completing his work as well as to produce only the bare minimum. In class, he says he begins the year sitting at a table with Jimi, Henry who he interviews and writes about for the British class, and Ben who D.M. says "is never there all the time" (Interview, March 25, 1988). Then he explains that he changes his table group and sits with Dave, Sheila, and another young woman.

Mark

Born in California, Mark lives with his parents and his younger brother. He loves airplanes, making models, water skiing, and the military. In an aside to one of the researchers, he scornfully dismisses "liberals." He says that he hopes to go to the Air Force Academy when he is old enough. He explains:

> I'm in this thing. It's called Sub Air Patrol. It's like an auxiliary to the Air Force. And it's like every Tuesday nights, yeah Oakland Airport. And we wear like Air Force uniforms. And that's like, it helps you to get in there [the Air Force Academy]. It's like another point you get, so that's why I joined it. If it wasn't for that, I wouldn't have joined it. (Interview, June 2, 1988)

In his autobiography Mark writes, "My nationality is a half phillipino one fourth German and a fourth mexican. I mostly look German." According to Susan, Mark is a "shaky but improving writer" who wants to use the exchange to report facts of social and cultural differences between the United States and England. She calls Mark a "matter of fact" type of person. Mark never mentions his tablemates but usually sits with Hank.

Lisa

Also a native Californian, Lisa is the oldest of two girls and lives with her sister, her mother, and her stepfather. She writes easily and fluently and uses the British audience to try to grow as a writer. Lisa is doing so well that she has been approached about moving to a higher track.

In her autobiography Lisa writes about dancing, her main interest:

> One special talent I can do is dancing. I've danced since I was about 7 or 8 years old. I started out with tap and ballet but now I take tap and jazz and just started tahitian which is a fast version of hula. The whole object of it is to just move your hips and arms but nothing else above the waist. Dancing takes lots of practice and I plan on dancing for many more years. I might be a teacher or go professional in years to come.

Besides dancing she swims on the school team.

In her autobiography she also explains that she has and values her many friends: "Without friends I don't think life would be as fun. But I don't have to worry about that." A nature lover, she concludes her autobiography with her vision of paradise:

> One place i would like to go would be a place like heaven. It would be peaceful, romantic, and have lots of wildlife. I wouldn't like too many people just a few because it wouldn't be as peaceful. It would have miles of Sandy Shoreline with crystal clear blue water. A carefree fantasy island. Far away from civilization.

Lisa always sits at a table with Nikki and Serena.

Jessica

Jessica is the daughter of a black American serviceman who met her Japanese mother when he was stationed in Japan. Jessica tells the story in her second interview:

> My mom had met my dad . . . cause my auntie she owned a bar, and she still do too, and so um, he met her there and stuff. Cause one night they—he was at that bar, so then my mom she was working there with her sister. So then they met each other, I guess. That's how everything got started.

Born in Japan, Jessica came to California when she was four. At that time she only spoke Japanese. She says that her father speaks only a little Japanese and her mother, who spoke no English when the family first arrived, now speaks good English. Jessica reports that she does not see her father often since he must travel a lot, but when he is at home their relationship is strained. Although Japanese was Jessica's first language and the language of the home when she was small, the home language shifted to English and she has lost most of her knowledge of Japanese. During the summer before the exchange year, Jessica went on a family trip to visit her mother's family in Japan. This was her first visit back since she was a small child, and this time she had difficulty communicating to her relatives. In her second interview, Freedman asked how old she was when she learned English. Although she could not recall exactly, she explains:

> I knew that I had to learn English, or if I didn't well, I'd probably . . . go to school, teach me some English and stuff, or have a tutor come by and teach me. But if I—if I was still speaking Japanese, I don't think I would be here.

Jessica believes that she would either have to speak Japanese or English, but not both. In her second and third interviews, she reveals that her older sister, who now is in eleventh grade, should be in twelfth; she was held back a year when she first came to the States because she did not know English when she went to school.

Jessica writes in her autobiography that she enjoys running and plans to try out for the school track team in the spring. She also collects goldfish. In a statement about her goals, she writes, "In the future I would like to go to college I want to go to Hayward or Cal Berekly. But when I get older I would like to be a Secratery." A confident person but not a confident writer, Jessica is someone Susan thinks relies more on her oral skills when she writes than on her literacy skills. Jessica says she sits at a table with her good friend Traci; and Rajaniece who Jessica says in her March 31 interview is "always absent." When he is present, Darren sometimes joins this table.

The Exchange

Parallel to the two previous chapters, to address the two research questions from inside these classrooms, we next follow Susan's and Irene's classes across time, looking particularly at the experiences of Susan's four focal students. The first question concerns how institutional constraints and supports affect the teaching and learning of writing in the classroom. The institutional context is previewed in the background section and further elaborated here. The second question, addressed in this section, concerns the writing development of the focal students and those classroom-based cultural practices that support their development.

As in Chapters 3 and 4, we first present an overview for the exchange, showing how the two teachers and their students negotiate the exchange as an activity, including how they fit it into their overall curriculum. Next the exchange writing is presented chronologically, as it unfolds for each of the focal students. We see how each piece of writing is framed in Susan's classroom, the resultant writing that her class sends, the British responses to it, and the British writing that comes and the responses in Susan's class to this writing from abroad.

Overview for the Exchange

Both Susan and Irene, being new to the exchange project, quickly have to fit into routines that are familiar to at least one if not both members of all the other pairs. They face a number of obstacles. At the start of the year they experience some miscommunication; they want their classes to work on parallel pieces of writing, but Susan thinks they agreed on autobiography while Irene thinks they will write a neighborhood piece. Although this problem is resolved with relative ease in favor of autobiographies, another more serious problem comes fast on its heels, a two-month long teachers' strike at Gladesmore—from mid-December through mid-February.[3] As Irene puts it:

> You know, when you pick up kids at the end of a strike like that, you don't pick up the same kids you had at the beginning. . . . You pick them up and they're angry and they're disillusioned, and one bit of them is saying, "We've missed out a lot of work, and I want to catch up." But the other bit, you know, which is just kids, and they are out of all those habits, and all those routines, and they have done absolutely nothing for you for about six weeks—it was probably longer. (Interview, March 13, 1989)

The strike, combined with Irene and her students' increasing anxiety about the upcoming examinations, decreases significantly the flow of exchange writing from Irene's class as the year goes on. Given Susan's careful management within her own class, her students maintain their interest in continuing the exchange, even as the year goes on and there is a relative sparsity of writing from England.

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[3] The teachers' union called the strike because the Borough of Haringey proposed severe cuts in educational spending which would reduce staffing levels and which meant that many of the borough's teachers would face dismissal. At first only a few schools in the borough were brought out on strike, for three days a week only--Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday--so that teachers' salaries would not be so seriously reduced. Gladesmore was one of the schools selected. Unfortunately, the exchange class met only on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. In the U.K. teachers' strikes often do not involve a complete work stoppage but rather a slow-down. When British teachers strike in this way, they commonly refuse to do extracurricular work or they may not teach on some days of the week, as was the case in the Haringey strike. The strike ended, however, only after it was expanded to all schools in the borough and after a full week of strike; during this week, the other exchange school in the Haringey borough, Northumberland Park where Kate Chapman teaches, was also on strike.

Timeline

Figure 5.3 charts the exchange writing across the year. It indicates that Susan's group sends more pieces than Irene's and spends more time on exchange work. Susan's group sends six pieces: school booklets, autobiographies, I Remember papers, place papers, summer letters, and the *Hello-Goodbye Book*. They also respond to the British autobiographies and send a set of computer letters. Irene's group sends four: introductory letters, autobiographies, an audiotape, and photos taken around the school neighborhood with commentaries. Irene's group responds only to the first U.S. work that arrives, the school booklet and they also send computer letters.

Word Counts

The word counts comparing two parallel pieces for the focal students, the autobiographies and the place papers, show an imbalance in the amount of writing in the two classes, with Irene's students, when they write, sending significantly longer pieces than Susan's (see Table 5.1). A likely result of their previous lack of opportunity to write extended prose in school, Susan's students send fewer words on a given assignment than any of the exchange classes, including Robin Davis's in Chapter 4. In Susan's class the students seem to work hard for long periods of time on a project, but in the end they have difficulty producing much prose. For example, they work on their autobiographies for two months, significantly longer than Irene's group and much longer than Judy's sixth graders or Robin's seventh graders who spend "three weeks maximum," but in that time, they write relatively few words.

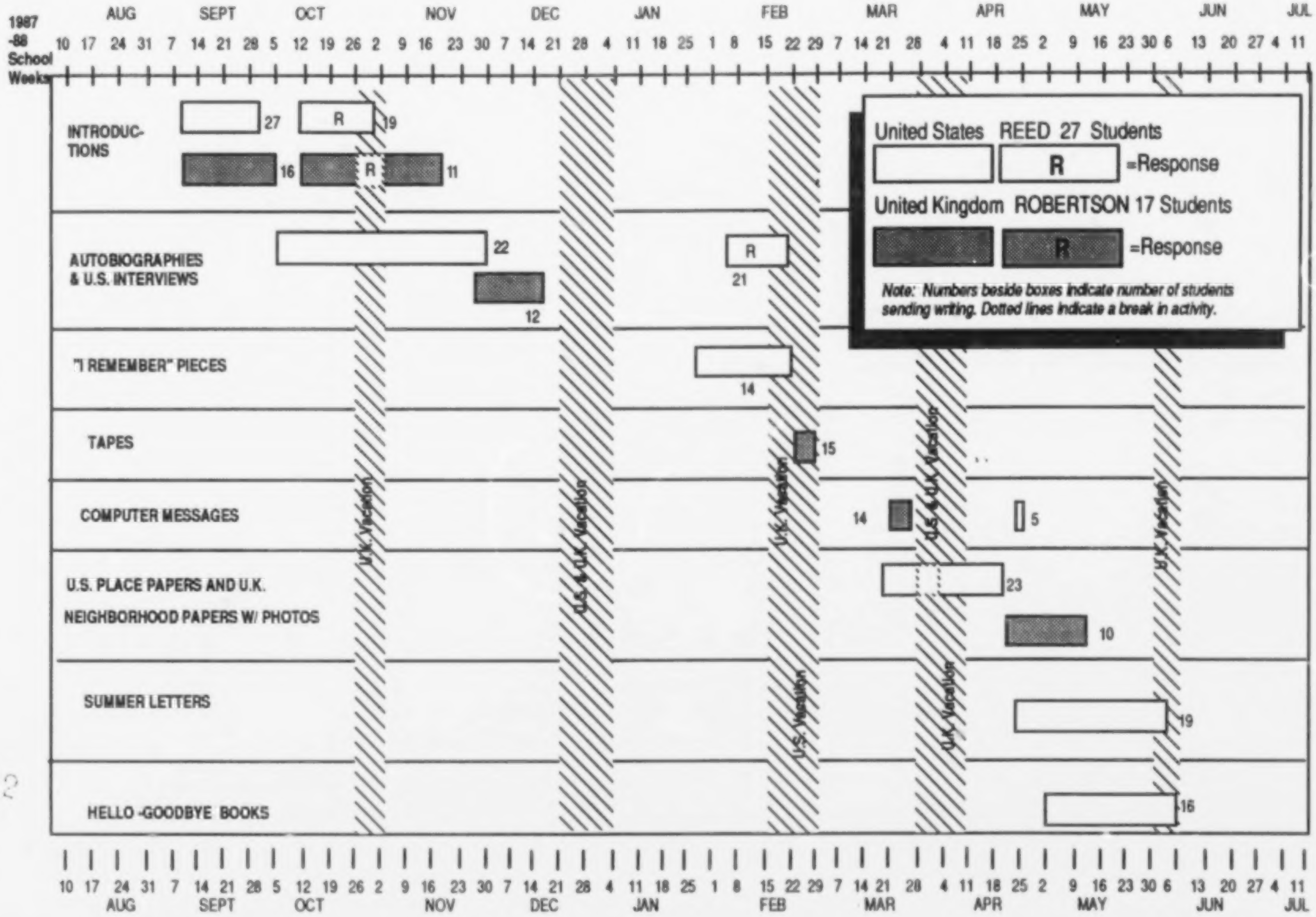
Organizing the Exchange

Melding the Exchange with the Curriculum: The Examination and Other Special Issues in England. When the exchange project was planned, the research team thought that it would not be difficult to combine writing for the exchange with writing for the examination. However, Irene was never confident that the two audiences could be integrated easily. She recalls her initial thoughts about the exchange in her interview with Ellie O'Sullivan:

> I thought it [the exchange] was like an opportunity, an opportunity for writing for an audience, and I thought at the time that the GCSEs were in fact—were probably far enough away for it not to matter at that stage. (Interview, February 6, 1989)

The strike removed all possibility of melding the exchange with the curriculum for Irene. When her students reconvened in mid-February, they faced not only reconnecting with the exchange class in the United States, but also catching up on their portfolio writing for the GCSE examination, which they would have to submit and receive passing marks on in the coming year. On top of all this, the researchers had been urging the teachers to get a computer mail link going; and Irene, even during the strike, had been working with Rob Doyle, the computer specialist at Gladesmore, on establishing this aspect of the exchange. Thus, in mid-February, Irene and her students had a number of competing and pressing demands on their time. Irene was attempting to keep three enterprises going—the exchange, the GCSE examination portfolio, and the computer link. Naturally, the GCSE was the most urgent.

Irene continued to view the exchange as an additional activity and felt that had the year gone normally, she would have been able to integrate it easily into her curriculum. She remarks that at her school teachers have a "generous amount of time with our fourth-years"; in reference to the exchange, she says, "I made sure there was time for them to do other things. I think that was one



Note: Numbers beside boxes indicate number of students sending writing. Dotted lines indicate a break in activity.

Table 5.1
Autobiography (including interviews) and Place:

US/UK Focal Students' Word Counts

		AUTO-BIOGRAPHIES	PLACE	TOTAL WORDS FOR EACH FOCAL STUDENT
REED	D.M.	280	147	427
	Lisa	470	304	774
	Mark	353	141	494
	Jessica	502	276	778
ROBERTSON	**Deenie/ Surge**	**610**	**292**	**902**
	Leabow	**647**	**233**	**880**
	K.C.	**1,251**	**452**	**1,703**
	DeMille	**779**	**336**	**1,115**
TOTAL, REED FOCAL STUDENTS		1,605	868	2,473
TOTAL, ROBERTSON FOCAL STUDENTS		**3,287**	**1,313**	**4,600**

of the things that ensured that the exchange wasn't taking up the whole time." As Robin's experience in Chapter 4 reveals, the exchange becomes problematic for teachers when they are unable to make it their entire writing program. In this exchange, we cannot determine whether Irene's initial conception would have proven successful; once the year goes awry with the strike, much of the exchange work goes by the wayside.

In contrast to Irene and much like John Hickman in Chapter 4, Susan immediately turns the bulk of her writing curriculum over to the exchange. She and her students craft all their writing for the year for the British audience, with the exception of their writing about literature. Interestingly, the reduced flow of writing from Irene's class, although disappointing to Susan's students, does not dampen their basic enthusiasm, at least not until the end of the year when some begin to feel impatient at not having heard from the British class for many months and then, hoping for more, feeling disappointment with the photos and commentaries that arrive at the end.

Establishing Social Links. What sustains the experience for Susan's traditionally low-achieving students across the course of the year is a strong social link they establish at the start. This link involves both the kind of personal connection Robin's students are trying to initiate and Judy's accomplish bolstered by reflections on the culture from which the British students come, similar to the kinds of reflections in Judy's class. Susan nurtures this link, keeping the exchange alive for them. She initiates and develops a continuing conversation with her students about England as they complete their own writing, and she helps them make full use of whatever does come from the U.K. In addition, within her classroom, Susan creates a community of writers who compose collaboratively as they sit together around small tables; who receive response from her, the Write Team, and one another; and who feel comfortable putting their social selves into their academic tasks. Given Susan's academic expectations, coupled with a secure and nurturing community and a carefully organized learning environment, these ninth-grade students, who had found few connections to their academic work in the past, begin to progress as writers as they learn to add detail to their writing and as they write what for them is quite extended prose.

Writing for the Exchange

The length of each piece of writing sent by the focal students in Susan's class is presented on Table 5.2. Across time, although individual pieces are often in need of added detail (as Table 5.1 indicates), all the exchanges represent serious efforts for Susan's students. The result is that in the end Susan's students send more writing to England than Robin's mixed ability seventh-graders (a remarkable feat for this low-tracked group who have written little in the past) but less than Judy's "gifted" sixth-graders.

Introductions: U.S. Booklet and U.K. Letters

To get the year started, Susan writes to Irene in July when she joins the U.S. team. Receiving no reply, she writes again on August 23. Irene had been away for the summer and had not received Susan's first letter. Given the demands of the start of school, she had not had an opportunity to reply to the second.

Since school was starting and the teachers needed to communicate, the U.S. research team encouraged Susan to telephone Irene. Susan called on September 6. In this telephone conversation, among other things, Susan and Irene decide on a first project, introductions, which will present an overview of the school with both photos and narration.

The Writing. In Susan's class the introduction takes the form of a bound booklet produced by the class. Her students work on the booklet for the entire first month of school, mailing it to England on October 2. All 27 students who are enrolled at that time participate.

Table 5.2
Number of Words

	LISA	JESSICA	MARK	D.M.
INTRODUCTIONS	138	491	196	306
RESPONSE TO INTRODUCTIONS	274	269	153	----
AUTOBIOGRAPHIES AND INTERVIEWS	470	502	353	280
RESPONSE TO AUTOBIOGRAPHIES	136	96	95	105
"I REMEMBER" PIECES	---	133	193	----
PLACE PAPERS	304	276	141	147
SUMER LETTERS	276	297	112	94
HELLO-GOODBYE BOOKS	317	----	281	449
TOTAL	1,915	2,065	1,524	1,381

The booklet contains eight "letters" written collaboratively by small groups of on average four students each. The students work with others who sit at their table, much as British students commonly work with their table mates. The topics of the "letters" vary and include descriptions of the sports that De Anza supports, the school counselors and security force, the daily class schedule. A few capture something of the unique activities of an American high school. For example, D.M. and his group write:

> Dear Students of Gladesmore,
>
> How are you? We are fine. I'm going to tell you a little about De Anza High School. . . . We have a big ceremony called a rally. At the rally we have dances. We also have competitions like hiting a pinata or who can scream the loudest. The cheerleaders come out and do great cheers for us. The rallies are always on the day of the football game.

And Jessica and her group write:

> I guess I'm going to start by telling you about our special occassions at D.A. Its' special because it's fun to show off your new clothes and your date. Some people get rental cars, or some just have there on, but people that like to be the fanciest get limo's. The girls wear dresses and the guys wear tuxedos or suits. You and your date take pictures. They play music and you dance or walk around looking at other couples.

Although a few students express uncertainty about their "new" readers, most are responsive to the idea of a real audience for their writing. Mark writes in his journal on September 11 that he wants to take pictures to send to England and then writes, "I hope it will be fun writing to these people. I think it will be fun." In her journal entry, Lisa writes, "I think It is neat we will be communicating with other people out of our country. There are interesting things to find out." Even in her first writing to the British students, she announces,

> Our class thinks we are very lucky to have been chosen for this London Exchange! We think that it's going to be very interesting.
>
> Every day we are learning more & more about your customs. I hope that through this exchange we will learn more about one another.

In Jessica's March 31 interview, she reviews her writing up to that point in the year and says that if she had to choose only one piece to send to England, it would be the introductory booklet because from it she thinks the British students would have "a picture of how, it it would be down here, from from what they would picture us in their minds."

Meanwhile, at Gladesmore in London Irene's students prepare introductions of their school and send 16 single-authored letters to Susan's class, with a brief cover letter from Irene. In these introductions, the British students typically lament the English weather, the dearth of English television channels, and the rough neighborhood of Tottenham that surrounds Gladesmore. Some describe the school setting, but these introductory pieces seem less about the school itself than about the students' hobbies, interests, and concerns.

Kelly begins in the usual way:

> Dear friends,
>
> Hi. My name is Kelly. I am 14 years old, I've got brown hair, blue eyes I'm tall and slim. I go to a school called Gladesmore Community School. There are sevaral buildings. One of the best buildings is the science block.

After providing detail about the green house on the top floor of the science building, Kelly tells about the classes she will take. She concludes by saying that among other courses she will take "P.S.M." and then for her U.S. audience adds, "If you are wondering what P.S.M. stand for, it stands for personal, social, moral, education. With love, Kelly."

Spyder's letter opens the same way as Kelly's, but he quickly adds personal information. For example, about his neighborhood, Tottenham, Spyder writes:

> I live in Tottenham. You might have heard of it in the news a few years ago about 1985 so riots happened. It's quite a tough place but it's okay if you have been living her all your life. In the housing estate that I live on is just behind the school about a 2 minute walk if that.

De Mille's letter has a different tone:

> Dear Pupils in California,
>
> Sunny California I believe the saying is. And what a place to be in. The sun, the moonlight, the romance in the air and all the good looking girls. WOW. That's the place I'd like to be. And one day (by Gods Grace) I will go to Sunny California where all the nice business like people are at.

De Mille continues by introducing himself and reporting that "Europe ain't much of a place to live in all your lives" and that "If you want to have fun and adventure, then England would be the last place to go. But if you want to die early, grow ugly and live like a pauper, then ENGLAND would be the best place to go." Continuing to keep his readers' attention, he begins his next paragraph:

> Anyway, lets not make the day dull. I know you've got to read a lot of letters and I appreciate that. So i'll just get straight to the point. Could you perhaps tell me approximately how many channels you have on your t.v.s?
>
> Another thing that has fascinated me is that in America there are plenty of good looking girls and women. Lovely legs, big busts and pretty features. Not like over here in ENGLAND. There are hardly any decent looking, good figured and pleasant girls. They are all dry faced, rusty skinned and out of shaped things called girls/women.

De Mille then says he imagines everyone else has written about the school and that he "just cant be bothered to go through all that again." He ends by describing what he is wearing in the class photograph and asking for pictures of Susan's students.

Reception of the British Writing: Reaching out to Individuals. Susan distributes the British letters on October 16. They create great excitement. A member of the research team observed Susan's students spend the period reading letters and talking informally about the British writing with their tablemates. While they read, Susan and her eleventh-grade assistant who had visited England, circulate around the room. At one point the vice principal comes in and unobtrusively circulates. Word spreads quickly that De Mille's letter is especially good, and everyone wants to see it.

De Mille's letter quickly becomes central to the exchange. After the tables finish reading their letters, Susan asks D.M. to read De Mille's letter aloud to the whole class. Although D.M. begins reading, he stops in the middle, and one of the girls takes over. Susan reports that D.M.

was embarrased by some of the language, in particular De Mille's use of the word "bust." By this time, everyone in Susan's room feels that they know De Mille.

Hearing about the excitement in Susan's room, the principal makes an impromptu visit. He wants to see the students' reactions to the writing from England. Having visited England himself, he takes the opportunity to lead a whole-class discussion about life there.

Within a couple of weeks after receiving the British introductions, Susan's class sends individual response letters to the students at Gladesmore. Susan writes in her journal that her students voluntarily stayed in class late on a Friday afternoon when the rest of the school was at a large pep rally because they wanted to finish their responses:

> What a miracle occurred on Friday. . . Special schedule—rally—parade and all. They wrote their letters willingly. [One student] who doesn't read or write worked all period on a response. One full page. Everybody worked! . . . They were delighted that Maria [vice principal] gave them pens too. . . . I told them she did this because she was so impressed with what they were doing. She couldn't believe they did that work on Friday either.

Susan also writes that her students are willing to proofread the letters twice and to help each other with proofreading.

The replies from Susan's students are directed to individuals in England. The U.S. students, through these responses, are attempting to establish a personal connection with individual British students. In their replies they mimic the British introductory letters, with descriptions of their own and their classmates' physical appearances and of their likes and dislikes. Their responses contain little evaluation; they mostly reveal themselves as people and begin to reflect on their social place as they extend the experiences from the British writing. Of the focal students, only D.M. does not send a reply.

U.S. Response as Evaluation. In these relatively full letters, the focal students only write two lines of direct evaluation of what has come from England. Jessica says in her letter to De Mille, "The letter you wrote was real funny." And Mark concludes his letter to Spyder with a postscript: "P.S. Thanks for all the great letters."

U.S. Response as Personal Communication. Much of the response from Susan's class involves personal communication.

Jessica begins her letter to De Mille with personal information:

> Dear De Mille,
>
> Hi my name is Jessica Franklin I'm 14 years old and I attend DeAnza High School. I'm in the 9th grade. I have black hair, brown eyes, I'm light skin I weigh about 111 pounds. My height is 5'4.

Likewise, Mark writes to Spyder:

> Dear Spyder,
>
> Hi my name is Mark. I go to De Anza High School.

Later, he continues with more self-initiated experience:

> I live in a town named El Sobrante. It's a boring little town there's nothing to do. I just go to the shopping mall, movies or just mess around. I play football after school. I'm on the school team it's fun but it gets tiring and I get hurt. If you want to know who I am. I am the one in the blue tang top with a white mouse on it, I'm also wearing a Red Hat. If you write back to us write to me okay! Well I better go. See ya later.
>
> Your friend,
> Mark Masterson

Lisa opens much like the other two but also includes a section about Halloween:

> Quite a fun holiday that I hear you, in London, don't have is Halloween. It's on October 31st. Everyone dresses up in a costume, any kind or person. When it begins to get dark everyone goes door-to-door or what is called Trick-or Treating and we get candy from the people who live there. At the end of the night everyone has a full bag of candy. The only problem with this holiday is if you eat too much of it you might have to make a visit to your dentist or doctor. If you know of any holidays you have and we don't please, if you can, write me and tell me about it. Or just tell me about any subject you think I will find interesting to know.

U.S. Response as Extending Experience. All of Susan's students also take this opportunity to reflect on and extend experiences the British students have written about. In his letter to Spyder, Mark extends an experience first relayed by Spyder:

> I read your letter. So you live behind the school that's good you just walk for 2 minutes. I live about 1 mile away from school but I always get a ride from my friend.

In her letter to Kelly, Lisa also extends an experience Kelly had mentioned, "Can I ask you what you do in personal, social, moral education? I've never heard of anything like that." Lisa closes her letter with another extension of experience, "One more thing which girl are you in the pictures?" In addition the personal information Lisa includes in her opening is almost an exact replica of Kelly's opening:

> Dear Kelly,
>
> Hi, my name is Lisa. I am 14 years old, I've got blonde hair and green-blue eyes. I am also tall and slim. I am in the 9th grade or what you would call the fifth year.

Note Lisa's use of "also" to indicate her reference back to Kelly's letter and her "what you would call the fifth year."

After her brief personal introduction, the bulk of Jessica's letter to De Mille involves extending experience:

> We had recieved your pictures today but I didn't get a chance to look at them. Your school seems real fun cause you can have all kinds of people come in and out of your school. California is not so sunny right now it's rainy. In your letter you had asked about how many channels we have we have many channels. You said that you guys only have 4 channls, but do you have channels called like HBO, MTV, Showtime. It sound like London is so poor. You said that the girls over there looks so ugly, dry faced, rusty skin. California seems to be a great place for you, can see the sun, the moonlight and the romance in the air, but if you do come down to see sunny California come down to De Anza. Now I had got the chance to see your picture today and you guys took a good picture. I had seen you, you are wearing a black and grey jacket. I think your real cute in

> that picture. Well I have to go now cause my teacher is going to mail this letter now. See ya later and write back.
>
> Yours Turly,
> Jessica

Response from Great Britain: Addressed to the Group. On November 30, "Thank You" responses arrive from 11 of Irene's students. Although many are more familiar and personal than in their introductions, they address the whole class, not individuals. Nearly all mention their fascination with the project and the recent visit of the U.S. and U.K. research teams to their class. Neither Kelly nor Spyder send letters this time.

British Response as Evaluation. Rarely evaluative, other than at the "thank you" level, Comp's opening evaluation is typical: "Dear Friends Thank you for your letters." With slightly more elaboration, Leabow begins:

> Dear American Friends,
> Thank you very much for your letters. I really enjoyed reading them. I thought they were very intresting telling us all about your school.

De Mille in his chatty style inserts his praise in the middle of his letter:

> Anyway. As I reply to your letters, I would like to say that it was a wonderful idea of yours to put three people's contribution into one letter. Very idealistic. I admire you americans. You got such style.

K.C. offers a similar positive evaluation:

> Hi! K.C. here again, and I'm writing just to say thanks. The letters you sent us were very informational and fruitful to our knowledge of your country,

British Response as Clarification. Several British students feel that the U.S. students have misunderstood some basic points about their school and seek to clarify these misconceptions in their letters. K.C. continues:

> but I hasten to add, that you may have been misled just a little about our schooling system.
>
> I read in one of your letters, that you heard that we were a single-sex school. You are very, very mistaken. That's all I'll say on that subject.
>
> As well as that, we are a multi-racial school. We have staff and pupils from all over the world. But I'm afraid to say, we have only had one American. . . .

Comp inserts a similar correction in his letter:

> but I am afraid that you have got a few things wrong about our school. Our school is a mixed sex school and not a single sex school. We have different teachers for different lessons.

British Response as Extending Experience. The British students take the opportunity of the research team's visit to extend what they perceive to be an experience they share with the U.S. students. Comp writes about the visit:

> The other day we had a visit for Sarah who comes from America. We talked about your school to Sarah. Sarah taped our lesson so you could listen to us talking about the work we are doing. Hope to here you from you soon

Leabow's letter includes the visit and what she has heard the U.S. students have said about the British writing:

> I heard that you recieved our letters and photographs and that you were very pleased about them. I hope you enjoyed our letters. The next letter I will be writing will be about myself and my earliest memories that I have got, when I was alot younger.
>
> Oh yes I nearly forgot about visistor we had. Her name is Sarah, I think you know her quite well. She came to talk you school and the exchange over in America. She explained alot of things to us and thanks to Sarah, I understand alot more about this project. I'm also beginning to understand certain thing's she told us about your school clearer.

Even De Mille includes something about the visit:

> You may have met Sarah at one time and probably Alex. We certainly have. And I tell you, you'll laugh if you see Alex's portable walker-tape recorder as I call it. But still, thats the way it goes.

British Response as Personal Communication. Although most of the British students do not initiate personal communication, most of De Mille's letter takes this form:

> Dear Folks,
>
> How you down there, dear kids of California? Before I go any further, I have to ask this one question. Do you have any girls in your form class? The amount of girls I saw turned out to be boys. Now why would I think of a horrid thing like that I wonder?

After his compliments on the U.S. letters, De Mille continues by asking about a television show:

> Tell me. Have you got a programme over there in the states called "Rod Serling's Night Gallery?" That is one series I would like to see.

He concludes with a few more personal words:

> To tell you the truth I haven't really got much to say to you guys. I'm not one for going into great detail about school and activities. Although our teacher's head does look like a cabbage.
>
> Anyway folks. I've got to be saying goodbye so . . . . . . goodbye
>
> From Master De Mille

British Response as Apology. Comp apologizes for the class's introductory letters. She writes:

> P.S. The reason you did not receive our original letters because we used it for our course work

"Course work" is writing for the examination folder; Comp apologizes for sending xeroxed copy.

Leabow apologizes for the shortness of her current letter:

> As you can see this letter is alot shorter than my other letter. My next letter will be much longer and I hope I won't bore you with it.
> Hope to hear from
> you soon
> Love,
> Leabow x

Conclusions. Through this first exchange of writing, both Irene's and Susan's students seem to get to know one another and grow in comfort with their distant audience. Indeed they seem to learn about each others' varied cultures, from the cultures in the classroom, to the school cultures, and to the cultures of the wider community. Susan's students begin oral dialogues with their classmates as they write collaboratively, and with their teacher, the research team, and other adults who enter in. They also begin a written dialogue across the two countries as they respond to one another's writing. As they enter into these local and international dialogues, they are opening up their critical imaginations and readying themselves for the kind of writing Irene describes in her quotation in Chapter 1. They do this by imagining themselves as others view them and observing and reflecting on the similarities and differences between the lives of the students in England and their own. In both countries the students offer one another only general and positive evaluations; they use the dialogue mostly to offer personal experiences and extend the experiences initiated by students in the other country. The British students do correct what they perceive to be Susan's students misconceptions and they occasionally apologize for their work. At this point Susan's students, through their responses, are reaching out to individuals in Irene's class, while Irene's students address the general audience of Susan's whole class.

Autobiographies and U.S. Interviews

This second exchange project is the one that Susan and Irene have difficulty coordinating. Susan and Irene discuss an autobiography project in their September 6 phone call; in her follow-up letter to Irene on October 14, Susan says that her class's next project will include several classroom writing activities, including reflections on personal values and tastes, which will go into an autobiography that she plans to mail by the first of December. However, in her October 7 letter that accompanies her class's introductory letters, Irene says to Susan that she hopes that Susan's plan is still to work next on a "local area" assignment.

The misunderstanding likely arises because in their telephone conversation they share reservations about autobiographies, fearing that a call for a great deal of personal material too early in the year might inhibit students. Susan interprets this to mean that the autobiographies will be the second rather than the first assignment. Irene thinks they agree to wait even longer before thinking about autobiographical writing.

In late October, when Freedman visits England, she and Irene discuss the miscommunications. Irene says that she does not think it will matter if her group and Susan's do different pieces, but she switches to autobiography. In a November 9 letter to Susan, Irene writes:

> I committed them to autobiography. I think not to worry. They are already planning a variety of approaches to that theme and some are certainly going to angle it on the area in which they live. Sarah has assured me that it really doesn't matter if your class and mine are doing something slightly different. What matters I think is getting something off on December 1.

Susan, who planned to switch to local area pieces to accommodate Irene, at this point switches back to autobiography. Thus, in the end both groups send autobiographies as the second exchange project, in spite of all the confusion.

Since the autobiographies are a major topic of conversation in the student interviews, we include what focal students say about how and what they write and their oral comments about the writing from abroad.

The Writing: Processes and Products. Susan's students do not seem to feel the effects of their teacher's difficulties communicating. They complete their initial drafts of their autobiographies, work collaboratively on revisions, and complete their final versions during November. In December they complete formal biographical interview of another student in the class. The whole package is mailed before the Christmas holiday break. Of those sending writing, 13, including all of Susan's focal students, send both autobiographies and interviews. For their autobiographies, Susan's students write about such topics as their looks, their favorite places, their plans for the future, people who have had an impact on their lives, what they do for fun and relaxation (bike-riding, watching television, hanging out in malls, dancing, listening to music).

Jessica begins her autobiography with an overview of her topics:

> I'm going to tell you about myself, about what I look like, what I like to do and where I'm going to be in five years. But now I'm going to tell you about my favorite sport and that is track in the springtime I'm going to sign-up for it. Track season starts in January. I enjoy running in the summer I would always go out and run.

She continues by describing her looks:

> Right now I'm going to tell you about how I look. I have black hair, brown, a light completion I'm 5'3 or 5'4 and my hair is the fair length.

After explaining her college plans and her desire to be a secretary, she begins her most elaborated section:

> The most funest place I'd like to go is Disneyland and Great America. If you don't know what they are I well tell you Disneyland is a fun entertainment place where people would go with there family or friends. Disneyland has many fun rides to get on and a show to see and going out to eat. At Great America they have the some thing to but different rides to get on. But at Disneyland they have this ride called Magic Mountain. And those are the fun place I'd to go.

Jessica recalls that she had run out of ideas and added this section on fun places: "That was a time when I ran out with nothing else to say" (Interview, March 31, 1988). Once Jessica begins though, she seems to feel the need to elaborate with background for her foreign readers on Disneyland and Great America.

Jessica then describes her hobby, collecting goldfish. She explains how she got this idea: "My mind just popped into my bedroom. And so then I just went in and started talking about my fish" (Interview, March 31, 1988). In her last lines, she calls her autobiography a "letter" and closes with a letter form:

> Will I'm going to end this letter now so I hope to hear from you very soon.
>
> Yours Truly,
> Jessica Franklin

In her final interview Jessica reflects on this early writing. She reports, "I never did a autobiography of myself before." She goes on to explain, "In my other English class, we just did reports and read books, but we never written things" (Interview, June 2, 1988). Jessica claims to have completed her entire autobiography in one day during a class session, admitting "I was kinda fast" (Interview, March 31, 1988). Jessica says that her tablemate and friend, Traci, helped her get ideas for her writing.

When asked in June if she could improve her autobiography if she had a chance to revise, Jessica says she would "put down more details." She explains the kinds of details she would add:

> I think the most interesting part of my life was when I was little. More little. And you know being put in this world. So I think that's that was the more interesting part. I think that's that's what I should have mainly did. My autobiography of of my childhood while I was growing up. (Interview, June 2, 1988)

Like Jessica, D.M. begins his autobiography by describing himself briefly. Then after mentioning his interest in football and baseball, in 130 words he narrates his memory of his first home run:

> I'm going to tell you about my first homerun. It was April 12, 1983 I was a minor league baseball player for the Vallejo Twins. It was the bottom 9th inning and I was batting next after my best friend Chris Smith (shortstop). He struck out and that made it 2 out and one man on second base. It was my turn at bat. I swung at two pitches and they were both strikes. I walked away from the plate swung the bat a few times and walk back up there again. Everyone was cheering for me because it was the Little League World Series Championship. The pitcher threw a curveball across the plate. I swung and the ball connected with the bat. It was for sure a home-run. We won 11 to 10.

In contrast to Jessica's one day, D.M. says he worked on his autobiography for "three or four days" at home, without any help. D.M. says he got the idea after "she [Susan] talked about what we wanted to write." He reports he "thought about it when I was sleeping. When I woke up I said you know, I'll probably just write about this. And when I came to school, you know, I finally figured it out, and I wrote about it" (Interview, March 25, 1988). D.M. explains proudly the importance of this home run to him and why he thinks the British students would be interested in it:

> I thought you know pretty amazing you know this little shrimpy kid hitting a home run. I was ten. Yeah ten. . . . I was real powerful. I could you know back then I think I could throw about forty miles per hour in baseball, and you know I was pretty good. Know we won the championships. Um went to the World Series. . . . Usually I would strike out, but I was a good pitcher, but I would usually strike out. Wouldn't really hit that much. And you know, so I thought I write about something baseball, which they probably don't even play. Mostly they play is rugby and football yeah. And I thought that was, you know, maybe I should write about it. It's pretty interesting. (Interview, March 25, 1988).

At the end of the year D.M. rereads his autobiography and adds even more detail orally about the game—how his team travelled from California to Pennsylvania and "played the Japanese Little League team" and that the game was televised. He then explains his role in his team's win and the importance of this game in building his confidence and improving his future performance:

> I hit two home runs out of that season so, and after that minor league . . . that was three home runs of that year, and then that following year, I went and I hit all fifteen, out of 20 games we played. So that was a exciting year for me. (Interview, June 2, 1988)

At the end of the year D.M. speculates that if he had an opportunity to revise his autobiography he, like Jessica, would add more detail:

> I should have told them . . . what I played. I mean you know, what position I played, uh should have told them, you know, what was this World Series Championship located at . . . what was the crowd like, you know. Hmm, hmm. That's about it. Because basically everything else was pretty good. (Interview, June 2, 1988)

Like D.M.'s, Mark's autobiography is brief and is written in one paragraph. Mark's contains more topics than D.M.'s. but none is as developed as D.M.'s 130-word home run incident. Mark describes himself; his hobby, building models, and his related ambition, to be a pilot; and another hobby, waterskiing. His most elaborated section of 78 words is about his model-building and his ambition:

> I have a hobbie. I build all kinds of models like jet air planes, helicopters, and ships. I'm in to millitary you can see. I only have 3 right now because four others broke. They all hang from the sealing. They are the F-15, A-7, and the SR-71. I'm going to be a pilot when I grow up first I have to go into the air force academy if they expect me. I'll be in there for five years.

When asked where he got his ideas, Mark says:

> I knew autobiographies were about yourself or someone so I know how to write about myself and I just wrote about . . . my features, my height, my weight, stuff like that. My hobbies, my nationalities, my where I live, and stuff like that. (Interview, March 25, 1988)

Mark says he worked alone on this piece, but that after he and his tablemates were finished, they shared their writing. He says he did not spend much time on it.

Mark says that if he could send only one piece for the year to England, unlike Jessica who would choose the introductory booklet, he would choose this autobiography. He explains his reasoning: "It's the longest. It tells them about me, so they know a lot more" (Interview, March 25, 1988). When Mark rereads his autobiography in June during his last interview he says that he could make it better if he were writing it then; he would correct a number of inaccurate facts (for example, his height and weight have changed) and especially for the last part he would "make it so it sounds right" by rewriting some of the sentences. Although Mark mentions that his teacher has told him his writing would benefit from more detail and although he claims that he now adds more detail than he did earlier in the year, when he looks back at his autobiography, he does not spontaneously think about adding detail as a way to improve it.

Unlike the other focal students', Lisa's carefully written autobiography is never sent. Although she completed it on time, Susan misplaced it; then when Susan found it, she forgot she had not sent it. Susan does not realize what has happened until her last interview in July when we ask for a copy of Lisa's autobiography.

The longest of any of the U.S. focal students', Lisa's autobiography contains four well-developed paragraphs, each one on a separate topic and each about as long as D.M.'s single home run incident. The first tells about her looks; the second about her special talent for dancing; the third about "someone" who has made an impact on her life, her friends; and the last about a fantasy place she would like to visit which she describes as "like heaven." Lisa begins:

> When I look in the mirror, I see a tall, slim, American girl with blonde hair a little past shoulder length. I have eyes that always change between the colors blue and green. I

> don't think of myself as beautiful but I'm not ugly. I guess I would have to leave that opinion up to other people. The way I dress I wouldn't really call Preppy. I mostly wear jeans or pants and sometimes mini-skirts. Mini-skirts are kind of in style now. Lots of people wear them. I wear Reebok tennis shoes and I wear flat dress shoes with skirts. I have straight teeth (because I wore braces for 2 years) and a fair complexion. I guess I'm not a real bad looking person.

About someone who has influenced her, she writes:

> Someone that has made a big impact on my life are my friends. I look up to my friends when I am in trouble or just for an opinion. My friends can count on me for help also. They are always there for me and I will be here for them. Without friends I don't think life would be as fun. But I don't have to worry about that.

During Lisa's interviews, the research team did not have her autobiography and, therefore, did not ask her about it.

Moving from the autobiographies to the interviews, Lisa interviews Nikki. Her interview is sent:

> Today on November 13, 1987 I talked with Nikki Stern in English. Nikki has darkbrown hair, brown eyes, and is Mexican. I found she teaches sundaty school class on her own. She loves to teach Bible study and singing to children between the ages 3-12 years.
> She has her own children's choir. She has been teaching voluntarily for about 2 yrs. and plans to keep on teaching for many years. Her favorite subject to teach is singing, " I love to teach singing," says Nikki, "It's really fun!" Her best experience in teaching is when she taught a handicapped kid, David, how to sing. He later took that ability infront of everyone. "Teaching sunday school is a real enjoyment for me!" says Nikki, a real caring person.

Lisa explains her teacher's directions for conducting the interview:

> She said like think up like about ten or more questions that you could ask them and then ask them and then write their answers down and then like write that in a paragraph, and just make it the best description. (Interview, March 25, 1988)

Lisa explains what she asked Nikki and what Nikki revealed:

> I asked her what . . . she likes to do in her spare time, and she said teach Sunday school class. So I asked her questions about Sunday school and if she liked it or not . . . she told me about how she helped this handicapped kid named David to sing and then it made her feel real good that she taught him how to sing, and he sang within the whole church. And I guess she just felt real good about that.

To write, Lisa says, "I just took the answers and made them . . . into sentences, and I guess made a paragraph out of it." Lisa claims writing the interview, from gathering the information to completing the text, took her about a week.

Jessica writes about her good friend, Traci:

> Traci is a girl who has lived here for 14 years. She was born in Kaiser Hospital at 3:14 a.m. on November 1, 1973. Traci now lives in San Pablo and is a 9th grader who attends DeAnza High School. She likes where she lives but some times she wants to move. If she did move, she would miss all of her friends that live nearby. She likes where she lives and

> plus it's very close to her cousins and alot of her friends. She will also miss her friends and her bedroom. Traci sometimes feel like she wants to move to another high school, if she does she wants to go to Kennedy High School. Traci has other friends at Kennedy, she does not know if she wants to stay at DeAnza for four years. Now I'm going to tell you about how she looks. She has straight black hair and brown eyes. She's about 5' or 5'1. Plus she's a very funny young lady. The thing Traci likes to do is going to the movies hanging out with her friends and talking on the phone. That's just about what I can tell you about Traci.

Jessica says she asked Traci normal interview questions by which she means questions such as, "where they come from, uh what they like to do." She reports that after she decided on some questions, "she [Traci] asked me what I'm gonna ask her and then she added like a few questions that I could ask her. And so that's how it went" (Interview, March 31, 1988). This interview seems to have the form of a comfortable give-and-take between friends. Jessica works on her interview write-up for "a couple of days," longer than the class session she devoted to her own autobiography. Jesscia explains that she wrote a "rough draft," then proofread it, and finally "I think one of our classmates read it, and if they found any mistakes you know, we had to take that out. Then we had got it down to the final draft."

For his interview, D.M. talked to Henry, one of his tablemates. In his March 25 interview with the research team, D.M. says that when he interviewed Henry, "he [Henry] wanted to talk about girls," and so D.M. followed Henry's lead, asking him questions about girls, like "what kind of girls you like," "how do you treat your girls," "what's your secret to getting girls," "what's the age," what kind of girls you talk to and and uh how many do you see usually a day." D.M. also "asked him . . . where do he take, you know, his real girlfriends, the ones he be really going with. Where do take them you know." This reply impresses D.M.: "He says he takes him on a cliff overlooking a shiny moon." D.M. continues, "He told me that he likes black, white, and Mexican. Um then um I ask him did all his girls are they very good looking. And he said you know yes." Later in this same interview D.M. fills in more, "Nowadays he likes any girl that walks the streets. And uh so you never know who he likes. You know one day he's with a Filipino. Next day he's with a black girl you know." D.M. writes:

> There a cool student in our 6th period English class named Henry Robbins. He's 5'7" and has black hair and Brown eyes. Henry is sixteen years old and drives a 1987 dropped Fiesta. His hobbies is girls, partin',having fun. Henry talks to all kinds of girls such as Black, White, and Mexican. All the girls he talk to are very good-lookin. Sometimes he talks to 10 to 15 girls a days. But sometimes he goes very serious with a girl once in a while. When he's with has a real girlfriends he takes her to a cliff over looking the shiny moon. Henry likes girls as much as they like him.

As with his autobiography, D.M. gives much more detail in the oral language of his interview than in his writing. He says Henry and his teacher helped him on this paragraph. Susan corrected his punctuation, but "everything else she [Susan] said was, you know, great" (Interview, March 25, 1988).

Mark writes the following about Dave Rainey:

> I interviewed Dave today. He's 14 years old. He's white with blonde hair. He's 6'2 feet. Dave says he likes to work with his hands. He especially likes to work with metal and wood. he goes to his cousin's shop on weekends. His shop is in pittsburgh. Its about 20 miles from here. He goes there every two weeks. Dave says he makes things like planters for plants, Decks, and a dog house. He says his best piece of work is the deck. It was about 20 foot by 12 feet. Red wood is his favorite wood to work with because it wont break on you. He likes wood more than metal because it's easier to work

> with. His favorite machine is the band saw. His cousin taught him how to do all this. He says he does it because "it's just the glory of making things."

Mark considers this writing better than his own autobiography, but otherwise does not discuss it in his interviews.

Soon after returning from Christmas break, Susan's students receive autobiographies from Irene's class. They are significantly longer than the autobiographies Susan's students send. As Susan notes in her journal, the British autobiographies are for the most part autobiographical incidents or childhood memories. Irene's students use the extra words to achieve some depth as they develop relatively specific topics. Most focus on an early traumatic experience. Deenie's opening is typical:

> My Early Memories
>
> Lots of things have happened to me when I was little. I shall tell you some of them. I think the earliest thing I can remember was when I was about three. I had to go to the hospital for an operation on my navel. My mother said that when she felt my stomach once. She felt a hollowness near my navel. So she took me to the doctor and the doctor said that I would need an operation. I only spent a day in the hospital. I remember when I was wheeled to the operation room. and when the doctor was giving me gas to fall asleep. I was struggling not to smell the gas! After that, I remember when my mom and dad came for me to go home. A few weeks after that. I remember when I came back to the hospital, so the nurse could take out my stitches.

Sly begins his piece titled "In My Prime," with the following:

> When I was about 10 years old I shot a boy in the leg with an airgun because I did'nt like him and I was hideing behind a dustbin in the flat I lived in.

Sly continues to elaborate on the incident for two and a half pages, telling about how he fought with this boy, how he and a friend scared the boy with a dog, and then how a dog chased him and his friend until he fell. Sly then reports, "When I finished telling my mum what happened this is what she said, 'that fucking boy allway bring his damn dog around here.'" His mum then threatens to call the police on the boy and Sly concludes, "me and my friend began to laugh."

In her autobiography, Nymph includes a section of background information about where she used to live:

> We moved to a house in Wood Green, London and lived there for about three years. I can't remember many things from that house, all I can remember is my bedroom and the gardens, because I used to spend alot of time there playing on my bike. When I was a kid I used to be very spoilt, as I was the youngest.

De Mille writes about the traumas he experienced when he was about eight-years-old and was working with other kids to produce films. He begins the first chapter of his two-chapter autobiography:

> In 1981, a couple of mates of mine all grouped together in a meeting, deciding that we as kids should all start on a film production. I came up with the titles, plots, ideas and facilities. The rest were just a cast, production team, or pretence cameramen.

De Mille continues by telling about a Kung Fu film the group tried to put together but which never saw production because of infighting among the kids and then a horror film which got as far as the filming of one scene. He concludes this chapter explaining how he and his friends abandoned the project. In the second chapter De Mille writes about his next "junior school" where he began to make movies again and this time succeeded. After describing his success in some detail, he explains that he had to change schools again and that his film career stopped until 1985 when he resumed with 45-minute radio play, "Ride on the Orient Express."

Reception of the British Writing. Typical of her class, Jessica is in awe of De Mille's autobiography and of the experiences he writes about. She compares her work to his and comments about what she perceives as her immaturity for choosing to focus her writing on the personal and immediate:

> My autobiography seems so, so little, because he wrote about the movies and stuff. That seems big . . . I had nothing big to write about, and the one thing that I really enjoy is to run track, and so I signed up for that in the spring time. But then I got cut, cause I just haven't come to only two track meets, and so he [the coach] took me and my friend off. (Interview, June 2, 1988)

She speculates about the kind of effort she imagines De Mille put in:

> His is more longer. Seemed like it would take a long time I bet. And um like he have to, if he had done that movie acting career stuff a long time ago, he would have to go back, think of the things you know that went on in making that movie. And so he just sat down, took his time. I think that thing probably took about a week to write. (Interview, June 2, 1988)

For Jessica who spends one class period on her autobiography, a week would seem a very long time. Jessica is most impressed by De Mille's topic of his movie-making, and laments, "I want something really exciting to write about" (Interview, June 2, 1988). Jessica thinks De Mille wrote about this topic because his teacher gave him free reign:

> I think that um teacher said um write something real interesting, something good, something that was very exciting in your life and something that you're doing now and still good at it. So he just wrote it in.

Susan's class replies to individual British students to thank them for the autobiographies, sending all writers a response and sending several several students more than one. In these responses Susan's students

U.S. Response as Evaluation. D.M. provides a positive evaluation for Deenie as he sympathizes with her childhood surgery:

> Dear Deenie,
>
> Hi! I just would like to thank you for writing about yourself it was very good and I like it. I liked it when you told us about when you were scared of big people and you used to run, cry, and scream back to your mother. I bet your mum has a migraine every once in a while.

Lisa provides a general positive evaluation for Nymph, "I read your autobiography and I thought it was really great." Similarly, Jessica writes to De Mille, "Thank you very much for your letter." And Mark opens his letter to Sly, "I thought your letter was funny."

U.S. Response as Extending Experience. D.M. continues by extending the experience Deenie writes about:

> I had an operation when I was ten years old, for my foot. I know how it feels to have an operation. So never be very scared of any doctor because they can save your life.
>
> Your American friend
> D.M.
> Age: 15½

Lisa too continues by extending the experience Nymph writes about:

> It sounds as if your family has really moved around. I have never moved since I was born. The place, Wood Green, sounds as if it would be around alot of nature. Is it? I'm a nature lover. Well really an animal lover. I really hate the idea that scientists use animals for tests because usually those animals don't get a full life. So how do you like living in London. It sounds like a really nice place that your living at. I also love the accent that you guys have. Its so much different that it's interesting to listen to someone talk. Thank you for your time of writing to us in California, and for listening to me.
> Sincerely,
> Lisa

After his brief positive evaluation, the rest of Mark's letter involves extending Sly's experience about shooting the boy with the airgun:

> I think I would shoot that kid to if I didn't like him. So he brings his dog. Well I'd bring two big dogs to scare him. I would of went over to him and beat him up. He sounds like a punk. You should of went to his house or something and go egg and tp his house. That would be great. That's what me and my friend did when we didn't like this one kid. We were laughing for days.

Jessica extends De Mille's experience:

> That's nice when you have your life already knowing what you want to be when you get older.
>
> You had said that you and some friends had made a movie called the Hauted House and the Stunts Are Here Again. That's real nice to have a acting career.

U.S. Response as Personal Communication. Jessica continues her letter to De Mille with personal communication:

> We have aweek off from school this week because of Valentine's Day. Do you get a week off from school too? Well sorry I didn't get to much. Will hear from you next time.
>
> Sincerely yours,
> Jessica Franklin

No Response from England and Conclusions. Susan's students receive no responses from England to their autobiographies or to the interviews of their classmates. At this point the exchange is still relatively balanced, and although they do not receive response to their writing, Susan's students are still engaged in a reflective dialogue with their British audience.

The focal students show varied learning needs, which are getting fulfilled to varying degrees. On the surface D.M. is one of the weaker writers but his interviews show that he chooses topics that matter a great deal to him and that he can expand with oral language. Further, by the end of the school year, when D.M. reflects back on this writing he knows that he can improve it by adding more detail, but he does not know exactly what kind of detail to add. He seems to repeat feedback he will receive all year, to add detail, without too much sense of exactly how to do this. For example, D.M. says he would add information that is already in the writing (the position he plays) and that he would include new information related to the topic (about the crowd), but the crowd seems less relevant than some of the detail he supplies in his oral narration. Unlike D.M. Jessica learns from her reading of the British writing in combination with the feedback she receives. In her end-year reflections Jessica too knows that her writing would benefit from enriched detail. In thinking of the kind of detail she would add, she copies what she sees the British students' doing; she says she would like to have included early memories in her writing, the focus of the British writing and something she omits from her autobiography. Mark seems to be fulfilling the class assignment; he has a basic sense of the autobiography genre and follows it. He cannot articulate any change in his awareness across time. He does not seem to get help from either in-class feedback or the writing from England. Lisa, whose autobiography is not sent, writes the most complete piece, with four developed topics, each in a separate paragraph. For this exchange, she provides no information about her process or reflections at the end of the year.

D.M.'s and Jessica's late-in-the-year reflections on this early-in-the-year writing show the kind of awareness they are gaining as writers. Both become aware of what they need to do to improve their writing; in both cases, they know they need additional detail, feedback they receive repeatedly across they year. By the end of the year, D.M. still does not know exactly what kind of detail is needed. Jessica seems to use the British writing as a model to help her think about how to improve her own work. Unfortunately, we do not have data for Lisa on this issue, and Mark does not articulate any new awarenesses he might have.

U.S. I Remember Pieces

This topic for writing emerges as Susan's students write in their journals about the British student's autobiographies. At this time, many are prompted to recall an early childhood memory of their own. For example, Mark writes:

> K.C. sounds like a great kid. K.C. has alot of hobbies such as listen to music, poetry, collecting etc. I like his poem it was very nice I thought it alot of saddness. I remember when my uncle died in 1969 in the Vietnam War. He was killed in missing-in-action air attack. He got shot down in a helicopter. (Journal, January 19, 1988)

Upon reading these journal entries, Susan asks her class to create "I Remember" pieces based on their reflections. They actually begin working on this new piece of writing in late January, before they write their response letters to the British autobiographies.

The Writing. Ironically, given their genesis, the "I Remember" pieces turn out to be more formulaic and "modeled" than other writing done in Susan's class. In fact, Mark changes his topic to something much less personal than his uncle's death. In one paragraph, he writes about learning to waterski, a theme he started in his autobiography. Mark begins, "About three and a half years ago. I remember when I first tried to learn how to water ski." After telling about his early difficulties, he skips quickly to the next year when he says, "I finally got up." In almost the next line he brings the reader to the present when he concludes, "Now I can ski really good."

Jessica begins her single paragraph with a typical opening: "I remember when I got my first bike . . . ." She continues with memories of riding the bike and of her leaving the bike outside and her father running over it with his car. She concludes with a moral exemplum from her father: "He told me to never leave my bike outside again." Neither D.M. nor Lisa send an "I Remember" piece, and Jessica and Mark do not discuss this writing in their interviews.

We have no information about how these pieces are received in England.

U.K. Tapes

To reestablish communication with Susan's class after the strike, Irene's students make audiotapes in which they present themselves. They spend about a week on the tapes, working in four groups, with three students in three of the groups and six in the other group. Each group produces a cassette, with the longest approximately 30 minutes and the others 15 to 20 minutes. Irene's class gets the tapes ready in time for Alex McLeod, on his impending visit to the States, to deliver them to Susan's students. When Alex visits Susan's class on March 9, he describes the British students who are speaking on each tape and then plays selections.

On the tapes the British students give a detailed report of their leisure activities, many of them concentrating on music, even recording selections from their current favorites onto the tape. In the longest tape, De Mille, K.C. and Comp add a special section in which they write and perform an elaborate parody of a radio call-in show which they title, "*Problem Line* by Angela Griffiths." In their parody, the topic for the day is weddings, with expert panelists advising callers about when to wear tails and top hats, about appropriate wedding cakes, and about limousines. The slogan for the show is, "Remember, a problem shared is a problem helped." The first caller, "Miss Jane Peach," opens with questions about wedding attire:

Jane (in falsetto): Well, I'm getting married next July.

Panelist: Congratulations Jane.

Panelist: Yes, congratulations.

Jane: And I would like some advice about top hats. My mother says that male guests always wear top hats at all the best weddings.

Panelist: And tails.

Jane: What!

Panelist: Top hats and tails. You can't have one without the other.

Jane: I see. Well, can you tell me how to let the guests know what they are supposed to wear? Can I have, can I have it included on their wedding invitations?

Panelist: Yes, it could say in small print "morning suits will be worn." Then in larger print "top hats and tails may be hired from Flint's Bridal Fashions."

Jane: But you can't do that. That would be advertising. You cannot have advertising on a wedding invitation.

Panelist: Why not? It's perfectly legal.

Jane: But it's not done.

(whispering)

Panelist: Hey ho, on with the show. I'm sure, Jane, it will be a lovely wedding if all those top hats are around.

Jane: Thank you very much. Good bye.

Susan plays this part of the tape the day after Alex's visit. She, in fact, devotes the first part of the class for several days to playing the tapes, until she plays them all.

Reception of the British Tapes. Susan's students are excited to hear the tapes and to learn more about the British students. When Alex McLeod first plays the tapes, they laugh at appropriate points, mimic British pronunciations, and spontaneously discuss what they are hearing with the others at their tables. When De Mille opens with a special hello for Jessica and Traci, Susan's group responds in unison with "ooohs," and Jessica and Traci roll their eyes and look at each other. Susan writes in her journal:

> A ripple of recognition moved through the room when we heard a familiar name, when they pronounced "De Anza." When De Mille sent a special hello to Jessica & Traci . . . everybody was pleased."

She continues:

> Many students hung around after the bell. Still looking at one of the tape recorders or talking to Alex. Nikki thrust into his hand a note for D.J.
>
> I predict they will appreciate these tapes. (Journal, March 9, 1988)

However, Susan notes that her students could only attend for about 15 minutes and in reference to the wedding skit, she says, "The little scene they [the U.K. students] read got tedious." The students do not comment specifically about the radio skit in their journals.

About the tape in general, Speedy writes, "We were listening to London tapes. They were pretty good although it was hard to hear them." Jessica refers back to Alex's visit:

> That's sad to here that the kids school is on strike. I like there accent that they have I want to sound like that. I had thought that De Mille was going to say my name wrong when he said hi on the tape I was so surprised. (Journal, March 10, 1988)

Lisa writes in her journal:

> The tapes are very informative. Except listining to them for a long period of time can loose your interest. Also it gets kind of hard to understand the kids. (Journal, March 14, 1988)

The next week Lisa reconsiders when she writes about a tape the class was then listening to by Spyder, Blockhead, and Sly:

> These guys were the most Hyper people that I've heard so far. I liked this one because they didn't just talk about themselves. They talked about how they do and don't like things and people up in America. It can get boring just listening to people talk about their past life. (Journal, March 18, 1988)

Although Susan's students find the tapes sometimes difficult to understand and although they can only listen for short periods, they generally enjoy hearing the voices of the British class and feel reconnected to their British friends after the interruption of the British strike.

Conclusions. Susan uses the tapes to help her students reconnect to Irene's class. It is important to note the time Susan devotes to them; she helps her students enjoy them by recognizing their short attention spans for this particular activity and playing the tapes for short blocks of time across several classes. Given the potential difficulty in understanding the tapes, if Susan had not devoted adequate time to them, her students might have ignored this exchange activity.

Computer Messages

Besides sending the tape with Alex, Irene attempts to reestablish contact between her class and Susan's students through computer mail. Rob Doyle, the computer teacher at Gladesmore, succeeds in hooking Gladesmore to the Institute of Education in March. By the end of March, a month after the strike ends, the first computer mail from England arrives in Susan's class.

The Writing: U.K. Mail. The informal e-mail comes from 14 students. Each message is between one and four typed lines. The messages mainly serve to reestablish contact with the U.S. group. Many contain special words for individuals embedded in a note to the group. The following, with a special message to Mark, is typical:

> HI TO THE WHOLE CLASS AND A SPECIAL THANKS TO MARK WHO HAS TO COME A LONG WAY TO SCHOOL AND ENJOYS MAKING MODELS. FROM SPYDER..

Another contains a special message for D.M.:

> DEAR Sly/D.M.
> Thanks for writing to me.I am VERY HAPPY you liked my
> I hope you will like my next letter too.
> hope to hear from you soon.
> deenie stills

The Writing: U.S. Replies. Although Susan's students are by this time hard at work on yet another major project for the exchange, the place papers which are discussed in the next section, five of her students manage to send computer replies. They write these replies about a week after they complete their place papers. Of the focal students, only D.M. and Mark, who receive special messages from British students, send replies. Lisa, who is also mentioned by Nymph, does not reply. Two of the messages from Susan's group are addressed to the class while the others are addressed to individuals. D.M. writes two messages to Deenie:

> to deenie: thank you for sending your message. d.m.

> to deenie how are you? what type of thing interestyt you? how do you feel about writing to us? tell me if i should come up there this summer vacation do you think i would have a good time? after all most of the students there say itsboring see you later! d.m.

Mark writes to Spyder:

> whats up spyder? "surfs up dude" and one thing i only live 1 mile away from school and thank youfu for the message and hi to the whole class mark

Conclusions. As the year goes on, with nothing but the tapes and the computer messages having come from England since Christmas, Susan's students begin feeling restless. D.M. explains that these computer notes do not satisfy his desire to hear from the British class and his growing resentment about writing a lot himself and receiving little:

> I asked Mrs. Reed yesterday. I wanted to know uh, what's going on, you know. I wanted to know why haven't they sent us nothing. I mean we, we got this um, computer thing, but a few brief letters on it that they typed in, but we really haven't gotten anything back yet. You know, I mean we've been writing all this stuff, and I'm getting tired of it. (Interview, May 5, 1988)

By early June, when still no work has arrived from England, D.M. reports, "I'm getting kind of tired of it cause I wrote so much stuff, and they wrote so little." In her May interview Jessica spontaneously asks Freedman, "When is London gonna write us? Seems like they just forgot about us." Likewise Lisa asks, "Are they going to write to us pretty soon?" (Interview, May 5, 1988).

U.S. Place Papers and British Neighborhood Photos with Commentaries

Right before spring break in late March, Susan's students begin work on a piece about a place they like to visit or one they would suggest that a traveler from England visit. They continue working on these after break, until the middle of April when they send them to England.

Irene's class mails 13 photos of the Tottenham area on May 27, along with commentaries about nine of these. Only ten of Irene's students participated, each writing his or her own description of the nine photos. The British packet arrives in Susan's class on June 7, a week before the last day of school. This is the last writing from England and, other than the computer mail, the only writing received since the autobiographies just after Christmas break.

These commentaries appear to have been intended as the "local area" pieces that Irene refers to in her October letter. In her accompanying cover letter, Irene says, "We got very involved in doing work on Tottenham." She mentions that her students wrote a "discursive essay, weighing the advantages and disadvantages of the place," but that she felt the essay turned out "unexciting as correspondence." These essays become part of the writing students select from for their examination folders. Irene then says that for Susan's group, her class sends "a series of photographs and commentaries on them."

The Writing. The place papers from Susan's students vary in length from a paragraph to three or four pages, with some students having more success with their writing than others. With the tone of an encyclopedia entry, Mark describes Yosemite National Park in one paragraph. A typical sentence is: "It has four major water falls which are Yosemite falls, which is the biggest of them all." In his interview, he confesses that he only visited Yosemite once when he was eight years old. When asked why he wrote about Yosemite, he replies:

> I always write about it. Every time I do. Well, most of the time, because I know . . . it passes. It's like the best. It'll pass because . . . like the proficiency test, like in seventh grade, I . . . wrote about that in the English thing. (Interview, May 5, 1988)

Once again Mark is not engaged with his topic. He sees this task as an assignment for the teacher, akin to a performance on a proficiency test.

Although D.M. continues to have difficulty getting his ideas onto the page, unlike Mark, he is engaged. D.M.'s paragraph about Pier 39 in San Francisco is sparse but personal. As part of his description, he tells about his favorite restaurant:

> My favorite place at Pier 39 is Bennihona's (a seafood restuarant). They make the best seafood salad I ever taste. The chef cooks on your table. So you can see how he chops up your vegetables, meat, and other foods to make one big dish.

In his May interview D.M. describes his experience at Benihana, relating it with vivid detail:

> We went into Benihana's, and um, I started talking to the chef. Um, you know, how he makes his food, and, you know, what made him so famous that, you know, cook at . . . where they can extend this big old table like this. It's like a everybody get together around a table, and inside he has . . . a stove or something. He cooks on it. He has woks going everywhere, you know. He has all kinds of stuff, . . . he's just a genius. He . . . takes the um piece of onion up in the air, [chopping sounds] and like that, you know, with a samurai sword, just chops it down. And he, you know, chops everything up. And he can take like forty chopped (unclear word) with meat in the bottom. It's good, you know. I learned a lot about that. I learned how to, you know, be a famous chopper at chopping vegetables. Um, and then I thought . . . this would be a good place for, if they [the U.K. students] want to come to you know, in our neighborhood area, and that Pier 39 would be pretty good. (Interview, May 5, 1988)

D.M. also explains his process of gathering information:

> I took a notebook, and I did some note taking. Me and my father, we went down there, and we spent like around about four or five hours, and . . . had a good time, and then we saw different things.

When asked what he did next, he replies:

> I start writing up a draft. I start, you know, I was sitting in the back of our camper, this (unclear word) for the camper, and I was um, my dad had a video camera he took with us. That way, we stuck in the VCR in our—our RV, and um, and I watching it. As I was watching, I would look over everything, just write everything down, you know, to make sure. I really had more than this, but, you know, I didn't take the time, put everything down.

He says he did not include more details because:

> My dad thought, you know, it was good, but maybe I should of added a little bit more, told about the people there. So I thought it was pretty good. She [Susan] liked it.

Essentially, D.M. says that he felt at the time that what he had written was sufficient. He used the reactions of his immediate readers, his father and his teacher, to confirm his sense; however, in retrospect he thinks, "Maybe I should of added a little bit more." Later in this same interview, when D.M. is asked "what do you like about the way you wrote it?" he replies with what he dislikes rather than what he likes. He says, "what I should've did, is made it more extendable, that's the only thing."

Jessica describes her summer in Japan where she says she visited "a lot of places." At the end of her paper, she discusses her visit to the Navy Base and being half-Japanese and staying with her Japanese family, wonders about its policy of excluding the Japanese:

> We stayed right by the Navy Base and we would go swimming there and they had so many American kids their I thought that I was back in California. I don't know why they didn't let the Japanese people in the Navy Base. It was one of their rules that they had.

She concludes as though she has written a letter, with "Yours Turly, Jessica Franklin."

Jessica works relatively hard on this writing, again with the help of her friend and tablemate Traci:

> First we had done a first rough draft, and then I had let my friend Traci read it, and so she correct me with some of my mistakes that I made, so then she, so I rewrote it. So then I guess I had a few little more mistakes, so Traci, she went through the whole thing and read it. So then I had finally came down to this. Then Ms. Reed she told us to turn it into the box. So then she collected it. I guess it went to London. (Interview, May 5, 1988)

When asked about the kinds of mistakes Traci corrects, Jessica says, "She said that I needed like more details." Jessica says Ms. Reed also read her writing before it was sent and suggested that she add more details. Jessica adds the details and says she did not include them in the first place because "I was like in a rush and stuff because she [Mrs. Reed] was up there saying if we don't turn it in, that that's gonna be it." When she is adding details her mother helps her remember parts of her trip that she forgot about. In an interview, Jessica reveals about Japanese place names, "I just, you know, forgot the names, because the names, they're real hard" (Interview, May 5, 1988).

In the end Jessica feels that this piece is still not her best work. She thinks that the British students will read her piece and realize similarities between their lifestyle and the Japanese lifestyle. Her reasoning goes like this:

> Japan lifestyle is almost the same to American lifestyle, and so it seems like the England lifestyle is the same with American lifestyle. They'll probably say, oh Japanese people, sort of live the same way we do, and uh so they'll probably say, oh we talk just like, almost just like California. (Interview, May 5, 1988)

As soon as Jessica makes this statement, she discusses some of the differences between California and Japan. She begins with the climate, remarking on the heat in Japan and then moves to the differences in the houses ("the rooms over here it's like they're kind of bigger, but their rooms, it was kind of small") and the furniture ("plus I had a hard time to get use to because they slept, um I forgot what it was called, but they have like this little cushion thing, you sleep on, a futon, it's like you're sleeping on the floor. God I had hard time adjusting to that)".

Later on Jessica reveals her mental image of London, as a place with vast and spread-out suburban-like residential areas, more like where she lives than like London itself:

> Seems like the stuff is almost close to ours, but then when I picture London, it's like a, a little town, lot of grass, and it's far away to get to the, you know, like the city and stuff, and go buy your food, and place to hang out. It seems like that stuff is real far from your house.

Lisa, consistent with her love of nature, writes about Tilden Park in Berkeley, where "there is nature everywhere you look," and where one can "get out of the city life." She writes in letter form, opening "Dear Gladesmore Students" and closing with "Sincerely, Lisa Long." After a long paragraph description of the attractions inside the park, Lisa writes a shorter paragraph about hiking:

> For people who love to go on hikes, there are also trails all over the hills at Tilden. When you go on these trails you never know what kind of nature you will see. There are plants, flowers, lakes and animals. On some of the hills you can get a view of the Bay Area. It is a beautiful sight. You can see the San Pablo Resevoir, trees all over, and once in a while people jogging or ridding bikes. To see everything at Tilden and enjoy it all you can't do it all in one day.

She concludes this paragraph with what sounds like a travel advertisement for the British students: "If you are in the Bay Area and love nature and having fun, the place to visit is Tilden Park!" In fact in her May interview Lisa indicates that she wrote these lines especially for her audience abroad. She thinks the British students will like her piece "if they like nature." She thinks they'll want to read what her class says about America and then decide "if they have those kinds of places down in London." She says that she does not direct her writing to individuals: "I just write to the whole class" (Interview, May 5, 1988).

Although Susan suggested that the students visit their places over spring break, unlike D.M., Lisa does not make a special visit to Tilden but rather relies on her memory of previous visits and her friend Serena's memories as well. Lisa says she

> wrote a draft, and then the Write Team came in, and they, we read it to them, and they said some things that how we could make it better, or longer, or to add a few, describe things more, if you can to make them see it themselves. And then we did another draft. . . We did all the drafts in class. (Interview, May 5, 1988)

Lisa says that after the Write Team's visit, she added information about the snack bars and she also recalls, "I don't know if I had about the hiking then in the first draft. I might have just added that, and the trails" (Interview, May 5, 1988). She also says her tablemate Serena had hiked at Tilden recently and helped her with the details about the hiking trails. Lisa reports that Ms. Reed read her draft and "she said it was good" (Interview, May 5, 1988). Lisa spent about a week on this piece. She says she chose Tilden over Great America which most of the students wrote about because,

> Everybody was doing that one [Great America], and I haven't been there in awhile. And I figure that since we saw so much nature in it [Tilden], that it would be easy to describe. (Interview, May 5, 1988)

She considered Lake Tahoe but chose Tilden because "this one sounded easier because Lake Tahoe all we did was go down in the snow" (Interview, May 5, 1988). She organizes this piece by putting all the attractions together. If she were to revise, Lisa says she could add more information because "It would give them more an idea of more what it's like there." Across the year, Lisa says "they taught us to be more descriptive about it and make it so the people could see, in their own minds what this place looks like." In the end Lisa says, "I like this piece."

The writing that comes from England has a different character. When the package comes, the photos, which had been taken earlier in the year, are separated from the commentaries because Irene says that she would "like to think that the commentaries quite clearly indicate to which photos they belong." Unfortunately, Susan and her students have difficulty matching the writing with the pictures, a problem that leads to difficulties interpreting the writing itself.

With an ironic undertone that is not understood by their U.S. audience, the British students describe such places as the Memorial to World War I and II dead, local pubs, Tottenham flats, the local tube station, and Broadwater Farm, scene of the racial disturbance a few years earlier. Deenie's commentary begins:

> Hot Shots of Tottenham!
>
> Seven Sisters Junction
>
> A lovely looking place, good view of railway lines, and local streets. Has been around for about 100 years. would make a good place for any hardworking signal man.

> The Dutch House
>
> Doesn't look like much outside, but it looks quite flashy inside. It is welcoming and cosy, not like your average pub in London. It is quite large, so there is enough space for drunk people to move around!!

Sandy Wing's commentary for the Dutch House gives a flavor of the similarity of these descriptions across students:

> Ducth House
>
> The Ducth House is a very classy Pub on the begining of Crowland road. It looks very nice inside but it also looks very expensive.
>
> It looks like the sort of Pub that posh people would go in but workmen go in there too.

Sandy also writes an interesting description for Broadwater farm:

> Broard Water farm
>
> Broard Water farm is a big estate in North Tottenham. A few years ago there was alot of bother between Black and White people. When aventually it got out of hand the riots started.

In his description of Broadwater, Dreamer comments:

> Broadwater has improved greatly people only get hasseled once a week instead of three times weekly by police.

Irene explains how the students came to use irony:

> Now it was KC who started the class off with that ironic style of doing a commentary on Tottenham because I did what I very often do. When somebody's got started and I know it's that very, very difficult time when people are sitting there trying to get started and they feel they've got nothing to say and they'll not get anywhere, I very often say, "Look just let me read the first paragraph of so and sos." . . . Certainly what got sparked off was this wealth of ironic comment. (Interview, June 9, 1988)

Reception of the British Writing. Susan writes in her journal about the response of her students to this last British packet:

> June 7, 1988
>
> Just a quick entry because my brain is moving faster than my fingers can write. Period 6 received a packet of letters from London today ——hooray! Finally. They were overjoyed to see something. We received many photographs of Tottenham area as well as accompanying descriptions of these photos. They read them with interest for a while then their enthusiasm faded to concern. "Why aren't they writing to us?" "These aren't addressed to us, are they, Mrs. Reed?" "I think there is some mistake—these are supposed to go with the pictures."
>
> They were confused about what they were receiving, and I sensed that they felt they weren't receiving real mail. Rajaniece just looked depressed. I'll have to peek at their logs

> to see the reactions. They did pass the letters around the room and everybody looked at the photos. We'll see what happens tomorrow.

Also in her last interview with the research team, Susan discusses this last work that came from England:

> The um form of it was a series of pictures that obviously Irene had tacked on a bulletin board. You could see where the holes were. But in sending them to us she'd removed them and not put anything on the back. They were unlabelled. Accompanying those pictures were descriptions. And well, she tells you this. It was her hope that they um— "I am deliberately not labelling the photographs because I'd like to think the commentaries quite clearly indicate to which photographs they belong." Okay, that part they're willing to play along with, but what disturbed them was that . . . nothing was written to them. They kept saying, again, it's probably because I haven't seen them for two months, I'm feeling so tenderly towards them, they said very nicely, "These weren't meant for us, were they Mrs. Reed?" Kind of . . . brought tears to my eyes that they felt gypped somehow. They'd waited so long to hear, and now here are these rather remote, anonymous audience pieces of writing: "This is Tottenham." That was their reaction.

In their journals on June 7, the day the British pictures and commentaries arrive, Lisa and Mark write positive but general remarks. Lisa writes, "I like the piece they did. It gives me somewhat of an Idea what it looks like there." Mark writes, "London gave us some photographs and some writtings. They took pictures of there area like the park, sub ways and just the buisy corners." Neither Jessica nor D.M. write anything in their journals.

The U.S. research team did not understand the importance of this writing any more than Susan and her students did. All U.S. readers agreed that this offering appeared insignificant. They read the notes about the places as straightforward descriptions.

Irene describes to Alex McLeod her students' intentions:

> I know that one of the things that students these days feel they have to do, when they talk about Tottenham, talk about living in Tottenham, is they have to try to distance themselves, from everybody's stereotypes of that area. And I think irony enables them to distance themselves, without, without them becomeing totally hostile to it. And that's important because after all it is the place where they're going to go on living. And I was quite delighted with a lot, a lot of their remarks about the area, and I just thought that was a different way of writing. It wasn't just pleasant chat about "Here am I, and this is who I am, and this is what I do." It was actually offering, offering a discourse on a different level. (Interview, March 13, 1989)

The British research team immediately understood that there was sophisticated irony behind the writing and fully appreciated the offering.

Conclusions. When Susan's students write their place papers, they are still trying to make contact with the U.K. audience, having not heard from them for awhile. Interestingly, Jessica and Lisa write their place papers in a quasi letter form. These pieces are much like their earlier writing. Mark still writes in a formulaic, test-writing style; D.M. remains engaged and working hard. He is the only one of the focal students to follow Susan's directions and actually visit his place and take notes on it. He still can tell his ideas orally much better than he can write them down. He could benefit from help with adding his oral stories in his writing. Jessica too could use help adding her oral language to her texts. She does receive the feedback that she needs more detail, and she adds detail during the drafting process. But even she thinks she could do better. Lisa continues to write competently but she knows she could add more detail to make her writing even better.

Unfortunately, the writing from England never is read as the writers and their teacher intended it to be. Susan's students do not appreciate the intended ironies as Irene's students reflected on their lives both critically and imaginatively. Quite simply, this cross-cultural miscommunication occurs because the U.S. group does not have sufficient background information about the British students' lives—either from past exchanges of writing or from within this exchange—to understand them. At this point in the year, the students are not receptive to pieces which they interpret as relatively impersonal. Because Susan and the U.S. research team do not understand the pieces either, unlike for the tape recordings, no one in the U.S. can help the students appreciate this exchange. Susan's students have no way to join in this reflection, to use their critical imaginations.

U.S. Summer Letters

The day before Susan's students send their computer messages and only a week after completing their place papers, they begin yet another project for the exchange, letters telling Irene's students about their summer plans. These letters are written at a time when Susan's group is feeling great frustration about not having heard from England for so long. They have not received the photos and commentaries which did little to relieve the frustration anyhow.

The Writing. The U.S. letters are a cross between a paper and a letter addressed to the class. For example, Lisa's begins:

> My Summer Vacation
>
> Dear Gladesmore Students,
>
> Hi, It's Lisa talking, and I'm going to tell you abut what I'm doing over my summer vacation. Which is travel. That's usually what alot of people do over their summer vacation.

Generally, the letters are punctuated by laments over the end of the exchange, the close of school, and the long silence from their friends at Gladesmore.

Evidence that the exchange was indeed a success for him, D.M.'s insights are clear as he uses the exchange for reflecting on his life. He writes to "Dear Gladesmore":

> You been a great resource for me to learn about you country and your school. I've learned alot and I hope you learned something aobut our school and country too.

Jessica is beginning to adopt some of De Mille's style as she opens:

> Dear Gladesmore Students,
>
> Hello, how are you doing? fine I hope. Well we are doing just fine. School is ending in about two weeks, we well be getting out on June 16th 1988. California is strarting to get much sunnier and warmer this would be the best time of the year that De Mille would like to visit since he is so interested in sunny California and the beautiful women that he would like to see.

Jessica writes that she plans to relax during her summer vacation and after explaining about summer school explains that she is not going to go this year. She continues, "Already at school kids are starting to get Summer Fever that's when the kids start to push all of there school work a side and getting ready for the summer." Jessica concludes with another special hello to De Mille and adds her home address for him.

In a personal letter Mark expresses his appreciation for the opportunity to participate in the exchange and thanks the students for their photos and captions:

> Dear friends
>
> Hi! How are you doing? I will really miss writting to you all. It was fun doing this project with you the whole year. It was something I've never done before and it was a good experiance for me. I really enjoyed recieving and reading your letters. They were very interisting to read. Hopefully this project can be done next year and we can keep on writting. We recieved your photo's and letters. Your areas are somewhat like are's. This will be are last leter we will write you because we are getting out of school pretty soon for summer. So I'll hear from you later.

Conclusions. These letters are relaxed and informal, showing the students' comfort with writing for the exchange and for D.M. and Jessica, especially, showing how they have benefitted from the experience, D.M to reflect on his life and Jessica to reflect on her writing.

U.S. Hello-Goodbye Book

While Susan's students were writing their letters about summer, they were also working on another more substantial project, the *Hello-Goodbye Book*. This book, with contributions from 16 of Susan's students, was sent to England on June 20. It was created in collaboration with teachers and students in two other classes at De Anza.

The Writing. The book contains a collection of interviews by ninth graders of twelfth graders on how to survive in high school, followed by a commentary from the twelfth grader on his or her interview. Susan's students found this writing highly engaging.

Mark's piece includes the following cautionary tale of a former drug abuser. His first paragraph reads:

> Today I interviewed M. I asked him a few questions. Here's what I had to say. First I asked him if he was going to college. Well he moved his mouth around and said, "I want to but he says it costs too much." He wasn't too amused. He told me about his problem with drugs. He started when he was in 6th grade up until his junior year, 11th grade. But he says it led him nowhere so he stopped.

In the *Hello-Goodbye Book*, following Mark's interview, is a rejoinder by M.:

> One piece of advice I was glad to receive was from my counselor at Forrest Farms, a rehab where I spent some time for drug dependency. He suggested that I call an emergency group to ask fellow clients for support.

After continuing in the same vein for several more sentences, M. concludes, "I was grateful that the people were willing to reach out."

In his last interview Mark explains that he likes this piece of writing best of everything he has produced all year. He compares this writing with his own autobiography at the start of the year, reporting, "This [last piece] was probably much harder to do" because "you know yourself" but you don't know the other person.

D.M. feels similarly about his last piece about Darnell, nicknamed Turbo, who wants to be a rap artist:

> Darnell also known as "Turbo" has told alot about being a Deanza student. Darnell told me what he wanted to be when he got out of high school? Going into the rap businees is what his goal is. Making it big as a Black artist. "But first he says, I want to try out the Air Force and become an architect.

D.M. interjects a section about Darnell's feelings about leaving De Anza and then continues with another animated paragraph about Turbo's nickname and his ambitions to be a Black entertainer:

> People ask how Turbo got the name Turbo? He told me " I got it from breakdancing in the hallway plus, I got it from the movie actor Turbo, also a breakdancer in the movier "Breakin." Turbo started breakdancing in the 9th grade at De Anza. Then rapping came out and Turbo was known for his good raps and style out of his pop-locking skills during the breakin days. But like Turbo said, "It time to move on and rap will get my goal.

After telling about Turbo's birthplace, D.M. concludes with words from Turbo that he elicited especially for the London audience:

> Turbo wants me to tell all people in London (Gladesmore Community) to stay in school and don't mess up. Get an education and make something of yourself that means don't get into drugs and alcohol. Just stay straight.

Lisa shows how much she admired the senior she interviewed when she writes, "I know it I will be a senior like Manny is now." Lisa describes her initial anxiety about this project:

> I met Manny on one of Mrs. Reed's challenging assignments. When she told me about interviewing the seniors, I thought, oh no, another one of Mrs. Reed's amazing ideas. On Wedesday when I went into Manny's classroom I found it wasn't so bad after all. Talking to Mark, gave me somewhat of an idea of what I have to look forward to when I become a senior. Most seniors woory about what they are going to do when they graduate from high school. Manny has decided he might go to work or make a big challenge in his life and go to college. One of his goals in life is to someday start a business of his own.

Lisa writes a paragraph about Manny's hobby of waterskiing and another about his nostalgia about leaving high school. She concludes with words for incoming students, not for the British audience:

> Mark had a little something to say to all of the people starting into high school. He said, "Stay in school for a full four years. Stay away from drugs, they mess up your life. Also go to all of the school functions."

Conclusions. Susan again is using writing to stimulate her students to think critically and creatively about present and future worlds. In this case, it is not just the British audience but the interaction with older students and the new audience of incoming students that helps her students reflect on their school careers.

Conclusions

As the school year progresses, Susan skillfully incorporates the audience exchange into her program of study. Given the at-risk label so commonly applied to her class and the problems on Irene's end with this exchange, Susan and her students' successes are indeed remarkable.

In response to the first research question, about institutional supports and constraints, Susan's and Irene's experiences provide a number of insights. Most important, even though Susan receives significant support from administrators at her school, she still deals daily with constraints that are endemic to the way schools are structured in the United States, constraints that affect her students' learning and her teaching and that are highlighted when juxtaposed with the British context. She also does not have to deal with some of the constraints which face Irene in the British system, in particular those associated with the national examinations for this age group.

The first constraint Susan faces, as the section "Institutional Contexts" revealed, comes from the fact that her extracurricular activities are not integrated with her school duties any more than Judy's or Robin's are. Although Susan works extremely hard to enhance her school environment (e.g., organizing the Write Team), much of her knowledge and energy is wasted because U.S. schools do not offer teachers promotions or recognize responsibilities beyond their classroom teaching. Ironically, Susan even serves as department chair without compensation, an arrangement that leaves her little time to act as department leader and in essence strips the department chair of serious academic responsibilities that she might appropriately assume. By contrast, Irene, who is also head of the faculty of communication, fits into a different kind of school organization. Like John who holds a more senior post and even like Kate who holds a more junior post, Irene assumes major responsibilities beyond her classroom and for which she is paid extra salary; she supervises first-year teachers, organizes support for non-native speakers of English in all their classes, and oversees the work of teachers in several departments within the communication faculty. After reading a draft of this chapter, Susan stresses the importance of this difference in the professional lives of British and U.S. teachers:

> That seems to me a very significant difference. . . . I'm richer for having done it [out-of-school professional work] but my school doesn't profit . . . . You ought to do another study just on that. (November 9, 1990)

Besides the fact that Susan's professional life is not adequately nurtured by the school organization, it is not sufficient in helping her getting to know her students and their needs. Following common practice in U.S. high schools, Susan teaches the exchange class for one period a day and is expected to keep them for only one year. By exerting a great deal of personal energy and taking advantage of the fact that her administration generally will help her achieve her goals if Susan voices a need, Susan arranges to keep most of the exchange class for an extra year and conducts her own research in which she describes the positive effects of having them for a second year (Reed, 1990). Indeed, Susan's situation is more flexible than most.

Another institutional constraint affecting Susan's work is the tracking of her students, especially since those in the exchange class are in the lowest track. As is typical for low-tracked classes, Susan's students have had little experience with extended reading or writing before they enter her class. She describes their previous experience as "dry and parched" (Interview, November 9, 1990). Their experience in school, especially their experience of enjoyable reading and thoughtful writing, has been severely limited. By ninth grade their self-esteem has suffered. They know they are tracked low, and their expectations for their academic performance are likely to be matched to their awareness of the school's judgment of their ability. In addition, they do not have the stimulus of classroom interchanges with other students of all abilities.

Also typical for a low-tracked group are these students' enrollment shifts and erratic attendance patterns, making it difficult for Susan to establish a stable community of learners. In the exchange class students leave and enter throughout the year, unlike in her two eleventh-grade honors classes which have no changes in enrollment during the year. Likewise, attendance is relatively stable in her honors group. For example, the attendance records for a randomly selected month (January) for one of Susan's honors classes showed that for the 23 students, there were 11 excused absences and only one absence that was not accounted for. By contrast, for the 25 students in the exchange class, there were 49 excused absences and eight not accounted for. Neither Judy's gifted group in Chapter 3 nor Robin's mixed-ability class in Chapter 4 face such enrollment shifts or erratic attendance. Likewise in England, Irene's mixed-ability class has stable enrollment and attendance patterns.

Although class size is normally an institutional constraint for Susan, it does not surface with the exchange class. Susan stresses that class sizes in the twenties are not typical for her. One of her eleventh grade honors classes had 33 students, an enrollment that is much more usual at her school. According to Susan, the relatively small size of the exchange class contributed to her ability to get to know her students and move them forward.

The second research question asks about the classroom cultures in the two countries and the effects on student growth. In spite of a number of institutional constraints, only some of which Susan has been able to overcome, Susan's classroom becomes a strong community of writers, with that community growing even stronger in their second year. Susan's room arrangement is much like that found in the British classrooms, with students sitting in small friendship groups around tables. The students have time to work together, to help one another, and to do much of their writing and revising in class. Susan's class is marked by an informal, workshop-type atmosphere, with students talking and working together. During the exchange year, according to Kate's and John's definitions of negotiation, Susan negotiates a great deal with her students. For example, within a context Susan set for writing an introductory book, students at a table worked together on this writing, with each table choosing their contribution and with students allocating tasks among themselves. Although Susan sets the context, the students choose what to say. However, in reflecting back on the exchange year Susan notes that her students seemed to have difficulty reflecting on their writing and their progress as writers, something "only the adults did any thinking about":

> This 9th grade class troubled me, even though good things had happened to them over the year. They had been part of a UC Berkeley research study which gave them the chance to exchange writing with a class in London. They had a lively audience for their writing, one interested to know all about life in California (where there's "the sun, the moonlight, the romance in the air and all the good looking girls," as one of their correspondents put it). And they liked the attention the study gave them: researchers in the classroom and coverage in the newspaper. But only the adults did any thinking about what was going on. The students kept "London logs," used to record their observations and comments about the exchange, but they never had anything to say. In interviews they were perplexed when asked to discuss their own writing. They couldn't point to changes they saw or to specific areas of growth they saw in their writing over time. (Reed, 1990, p. 183)

To remedy this situation, in her second year with the exchange class, Susan reorganized her instructional program to include even more negotiation than she had in the first year, with a goal of increasing the students' responsibility for decision-making of all types, especially their responsibility for reflecting on their progress as writers. Susan explains the changes she makes in her second year with these students, crediting Atwell (1987) with influencing her:

> I would make changes in the classroom first, changes to help them become more independent. I would give them responsibility for many of the decisions I had made for them the year before. As Nancie Atwell puts it, I needed to come out from behind the "big desk." . . . I would set up a supportive workshop, similar to the model Atwell describes in her book, *In the Middle*, structured according to the needs of writers. (Reed, 1990, p. 183)

Following Graves (1983), Atwell describes what might be considered a U.S. version of Kate's and John's British negotiated teaching. However, Atwell's version differs from the British vision in several important ways: (a) in Atwell's version, student's participate in the decision-making immediately and fully while in the British version that Kate discusses, there is a gradual release of control; (b) in Atwell's version students play a larger role in deciding what they will write about than in John's or Kate's British versions where the teacher is a more equal partner in the negotiation and decision-making processes and where negotiation is a base for a major part of the curriculum but not for the entire curriculum; (c) Atwell does not exploit the notion of a spiral curriculum, with students at varied ages cycling through varied types of writing; John discusses the importance of this spiraling for the British version where the same teacher keeps the same group across a number of years; (d) Atwell does not require that each student master a variety of types of writing, although variety is valued; in John's articulation of the British version, the teacher is responsible for seeing that all students master at least those types of writing on the GCSE examinations; and (e) Atwell's focus is as much on individualizing instruction as it is on social interaction, with the key social interactions focused more around individual learning than around community-building and creating shared group experiences. For example, the kinds of social interactions Atwell emphasizes include individual conferences between the teacher and the student about pieces of writing and informal talk among peers about what individual students are writing. Although in the British version that John articulates these kinds of interactions are highly valued, there is an equal amount of emphasis on whole-group discussions as ways of building the classroom community and setting motivating contexts for writing.

Susan's application of Atwell's ideas include a mix between Atwell's articulation and the British version. Although she follows Atwell in most of the ways listed above, she does not release control as abruptly as Atwell does. Susan makes a gradual transition to more and more negotiation, something she is able to do with her group over the two years she has them, much as Kate describes a gradual release of control in the British version. Susan now has moved to a new school where she only has her classes for one year; in this context she finds applying Atwell's ideas much more difficult since she has little time to get to know her students and to build a trusting learning community before sharing the decision-making process.

What Irene adds to Kate's and John's definitions of negotiation is consistent with notions that Susan subscribes to. Irene articulates essential values about how negotiated teaching promotes language development, in particular her students' writing development as they use language openly with their own voices and with their language developing from the base of their own experiences:

> I thought a lot of my kids wrote fairly openly. Astonishingly so. Uhm and that seems to be part of an important tradition in the teaching of English in England. I mean it's a tradition that actually is being increasingly, I mean it's increasingly under attack from the right and the left at the moment. I mean it's under attack from the right in the name of raising standards. It's under attack from the left in the name of, I suppose, post structuralism and deconstruction and all that analytic work which is now coming in. Uhm where less value and emphasis certainly is placed on you know the individual voice of the child. I mean that seems, I mean it's a notion I still work very powerfully with. Uhm it seems a dated notion and I'm not willing to let, I mean I have taken up other things. I have changed my practice. But I'm not, I'm not willing to let that other thing go. It must be possible to have a reconciliation of those two, I mean they're two quite powerful, quite powerful ideologies. I think they're powerful because they are thought through. They're thought through pedagogically. I mean it's not like the cry for standards really. Those are two ideologies that, you know, have the child's experience being central. And that being crucial, being central as a resource for you as a teacher and that being crucial for the child's language development, you know, we still have to live by that because we have no other explanation. (Interview, November 1, 1990)

It is precisely these notions of the centrality of the student's voice and the importance of their personal experience that underlie Atwell's (1987) descriptions and Susan's teaching, especially in her second year with the exchange class.

Irene does not sense major differences between her ways of teaching and Susan's, perhaps in part because during the exchange year Susan conducts a kind of negotiated classroom that is in many ways similar to Irene's British version. Also Irene's band of negotiation may be narrowed since she is teaching an examination class. Irene also notes that she has difficulty imagining how U.S. classrooms work since all she sees of Susan's teaching comes through the student writing; she had not visited U.S. schools, had not worked directly with U.S. teachers, and has communicated relatively little with Susan.

During the exchange year, Susan's classroom culture is marked most importantly by her interest in audience which prompts her close attention to the consequences that a new and strange audience has upon her students' writing. Susan's journal reveals the enthusiasm and joy of her students at the receipt of writing from England and their attention to their own writing targeted for the British audience. Even on rally day, she notes, her students quietly write and revise their pieces for Gladesmore. That Susan is freed from the role of evaluator is but one of the liberating effects of the audience exchange upon her class at De Anza. She delights in her students' new-found attention to writing, to their "commitment to doing," and claims that "writing for some real someone elses" allowed her students to perform better.

Susan discusses how her students attend to the needs of the British audience while they write their place papers:

> They really anguished over what to show. And it was neat to put on the overhead. I remember there were days—every day—it was kind of writing workshop, you know. Ask what draft you're working on. How you—what are you going to try today? But we had a list of what everybody was trying, and what I loved watching was how there were five Great Americas in their first declaration of what they'd like to describe, and as they saw that happening, some of them changed. (Interview, May 5, 1988)

Susan continues to reflect on this phenomenon and concludes, "They were remembering what the reason was for writing this. And if five people talked about Great America how boring. So some switched." It was precisely situations like this one which became the basis for the increases in negotiation in her second year with the exchange class.

Susan's students learn to attend to the needs of their distant audience because, in spite of the small amount of writing that comes from England, they feel a personal connection to the students in Irene's class, one that engages them in topics that require them to reflect on the larger social issues the exchange stimulates. That this personal base remains strong until the end of the year is evidenced by their very real frustration at the long silence in the second half of the year and by their negative reaction to the impersonality of the last writing. In her last interview, Susan relates, "Nobody ever said anything rude about the exchange, though they were getting frustrated, as you [Freedman] must have felt." However, Susan maintains her students' connection to England, using whatever materials are sent to good advantage. She uses the connections to build a strong personal and then broadly social base for the academic work of these traditionally low-achieving students who across the exchange year see uses for literacy and reasons for becoming literate. As Jessica remarks in her last interview:

> It's more like, um, what I think, what I want to write down. And, um, stuff about me, and stuff I want to tell other kids and stuff. And like before, we like read a book, do a report on it—that stuff was no fun. When asked if she thinks she learned anything during the

year, Jessica explains something she learned by reading De Mille's writing and by getting feedback from her teacher on her own work:

Jessica:	When I write like a letter I just keep on writing. He like stops to make a new paragraph.
Freedman:	Why do you think he does that?
Jessica:	Probably because he changes to a different subject. Then he goes on.
Freedman:	You think that's a good thing to do, or not a good thing to do, as far as—
Jessica:	Well I need that's what I need to start doing, cause Mrs. Reed on my other [paper], where my seniors went, she told me, you know, to make a new paragraph.

In spite of the little amount of give-and-take in this exchange the students' responses to one another early in the year likely helped Susan keep the connections in her students' minds. Students in both classes responded to one another with response as personal communication and as extending experience The British response also included some clarifications of what they thought were U.S. misconceptions. In both countries the students only rarely offered evaluative comments, and those were generally indications that what they received interested them.

In addition to keeping the British audience in their minds, Susan keeps their writing going by creating multiple audiences for it within her school context:

> But the beauty of it was how I stepped out of the front and worked with them in writing for this audience that really wasn't there. . . . I talked about . . . layers of audiences. They liked reading to each other. They also liked reading to the Write Team, which did happen fairly often. (July 19, 1988)

Across the year Susan coaches her students, who are sparse writers who have had little opportunity to write in the past, to add detail. In the British sense, her "stepping out of the front" allows her to take the stance of a negotiator. Jessica who learns from reading the British work, learns about new detail she might add. D.M. too knows his writing would benefit from added detail. He has less of a sense of how to come up with the detail, in part because he gets positive feedback when he writes less than he might. Mark rarely engages with writing; but by the end of the year with the interview of the senior, even he begins to shine. Lisa begins as a competent writer and remains one. As she practices her craft, she gradually improves.

In her own research, Susan notes even more marked progress when she has this group for a second year. Of the focal students, only Mark ends up with another teacher. Jessica's, Lisa's, and D.M.'s writing folders tripled or quadrupled in thickness from the first year to the second. As Susan helped the students practice reflecting on their own progress, they became articulate in describing their growth. In the United States, some teachers, like Susan, are beginning to ask for longer spans of time to teach their students, thinking that this arrangement offers some potential advantages for following and supporting individual students' development.

From the British point of view, the limited flow of sustained written work from Irene's class was intensified after the strike because of the pressures of the impending GCSE examination—especially since Irene was unable to manage integrating the exchange and examiner audiences. Irene and her students conclude that the examiner audience is somewhat incompatible with the exchange audience. Irene's students enter the classroom with their primary audience firmly in place and that audience is the external examiner. Whenever they face a conflict between the needs of the exchange audience and the needs of the examiner audience, the examiner necessarily wins. To add to the complication of having this powerful external audience, Irene feels the U.S. students will not be interested in pieces that go into the examination folder. Therefore, she has her group complete an added set of writing especially for the exchange, something that would be burdensome even in the best of conditions. In Irene's case, the burdens multiply as her group faces the complications of the teachers' strike and the wasted time trying to integrate the computers. Thus, the extended writing that John Hickman's and Kate Chapman's students do seems to diminish in the exchange as British students enter the first year of their examination course. The interference of the examination in the British classrooms becomes even more evident when Irene's group is placed side-by-side with Sue Llewellyn's examination class in Chapter 6.

The exchange writing seems to become a less creative effort as teachers are attempting to manage a dual curriculum, with the exchange being only a portion of the work their students are doing. Unless the exchange can be integrated with writing for the examination, it seems futile to continue to attempt it at this grade level in England. The research team's original conception was that the exchange could enrich the examination course; however, that idea still remains to be worked out. It is important to note that the examination itself was new during the exchange year and that the new format of ten coursework pieces for language and another ten for literature proved too much for students to handle. Over the next two years the examination boards cut the amount of required writing in half, with five pieces for language and five for literature becoming a more usual norm and with the language and literature examination integrated. Although John felt that he might tackle an exchange with an examination class given these new requirements, Irene felt she could better integrate an exchange with an examination class in the future, but that the changes in the examination would not be as much of a factor as the fact that she would have had experience with the exchange as a frame for activities and that she would know the short cuts. She continues to view the exchange necessarily as an addition for an examination class.

The issues surrounding the examination course raise a number of questions that the British research team will consider in the future. In particular, does writing in England become less complex and interesting and more formulaic once the examination course begins? If so, how can teachers in England continue to build on the kinds of extended writing that begin in the early years while still helping their students prepare appropriate work for their examination folders? Can the examination course accommodate any audience beyond the examiner? How is negotiated teaching affected by the need to prepare for the examinations? Since U.S. educational leaders are beginning to advocate introducing national examinations that are in many ways modelled after the British system (e.g., Resnick, 1990), it seems especially important to explore what happens in these examination classes.

CHAPTER 6—JOAN CONE AND SUE LLEWELLYN

General Background

The Teachers, Their Schools, and Their Classes

The Teachers

Joan Cone. Joan Cone teaches English at El Cerrito High School, which serves ethnically diverse students from both middle class and poor urban neighborhoods. Her five-course teaching load includes two sections of twelfth grade Advanced Placement English, one tenth grade honors class, and two ninth-grade "low-stanine" ("remedial") classes, one of which participated in the audience exchange project. Besides her teaching duties, Joan is the senior class advisor, a post that consumes at least five hours per week. As senior advisor, she meets weekly with the class officers and weekly with the Senior Central Committee, a group of 50 students who plan the social activities for the year.

Joan holds a B.A. in English from Seattle University and an M.A. in education from the University of California at Berkeley. She returned for her M.A. as a veteran teacher with over 20 years in the classroom because, even though she was considered one of the most successful and creative teachers in her district, she wanted to think more reflectively about her daily work. While in the M.A. program, she was especially interested in exploring her ideas about what influences students' aspirations, particularly ways that teachers and the school as a whole may exert unintended negative influences on student achievement. One of Joan's seminal experiences at Berkeley was a class on expectations and the prevention of school failure taught by psychology professor Rhona Weinstein. In this class, Joan worried that in spite of her good intentions she did not expect enough of her lower-achieving students. She worried especially about the students at the bottom, the ones so many others had written off. She wanted systematically to raise her expectations for them and see if she could positively affect their growth. Joan was not satisfied to make these changes just within her own classroom; she knew that for the students to receive maximal benefit it would be essential for other teachers and administrators at her school to join her in this effort.

After completing her M.A., Joan initiated and led an important and highly successful school change project. To start this project, she first convinced a number of teachers and administrators at her school to collaborate with her. Then on behalf of the group, she invited Professor Weinstein to join the collaboration and help the group experiment with ways of raising expectations for lower-tracked students and then trace the kinds of changes that might occur. Since El Cerrito, like Robin Davis's Albany Middle School in Chapter 4, was part of the School University Partnership for Educational Renewal (SUPER) program with U.C. Berkeley's School of Education, she and Weinstein obtained seed funding through SUPER to support and evaluate the changes. During the exchange year Joan was deeply involved in this project, which the group named Promoting Achievement through Collaborative Teaching (PACT). The program proved highly successful in reducing drop out rates, improving achievement patterns, reducing referrals for disciplinary action, and generally providing new opportunities for many formerly low-achieving students at El Cerrito (Weinstein et al., in press).

As part of the PACT program Joan and her colleagues continue to organize and lead weekly meetings of teachers at El Cerrito. Together she and the PACT teachers have worked to spread their ideas in other schools within the district and the county, giving informational workshops and sometimes working intensively with interested school sites. The PACT team has received some support through the Contra Costa County Office of Education and the Richmond Unified School District. Also, Joan received a mentor teacher award to continue to develop the PACT program.

For their work with PACT, Joan and her colleagues have received a great deal of attention beyond the bounds of their school district. The PACT program has received three awards, one to Weinstein for her collaborative work with the teachers from the California Association of Teachers of English, one program of excellence award from the California Association of School Superintendents, and another program of excellence award from the National Council of Teachers of English. Members of the PACT team have given papers at the American Educational Research Association, the National Council of Teachers of English, and state teachers' organizations. Joan also has written articles for national journals and her teaching was featured in an article in the first issue of the new magazine *Teacher* (Appendix 6). In addition, after the exchange year, Joan received two local "Teacher of the Year" awards.

During the exchange year, besides her efforts with the PACT program, Joan was involved in a research project which introduced computers into her classroom (Greenleaf, 1990). As part of that project, she obtained twelve IBM PCjrs which her students used during the 1987-88 exchange.

Beyond her school-based work, Joan is a Bay Area Writing Project (BAWP) teacher consultant. She is a member of the teacher-research group that Susan leads, and she coordinates BAWP workshops in the schools. However, because Joan spends most of her extracurricular energies in her school and in her district, she has less time for BAWP activities than Susan or Robin.

We did not invite Joan to participate in the first year of the exchange project because she was already committed to the PACT and the computer projects. Thus, the 1987-88 project year introduced Joan to the exchange program. When we had an opening in the second year, Joan accepted our invitation to join yet another university-school collaboration immediately and enthusiastically.

Sue Llewellyn. Joan's exchange partner, Sue Llewellyn, had participated during the first year of the exchange (Sue's original exchange partner found himself overcommitted at the start of the 1987-88 school year). Sue teaches English and drama at Burlington Danes School. She is second in charge of English and the head of drama in the English department. Sue received her B.Ed. with honors from Thomas Huxley College in 1980. While also teaching full time, she completed her M.A. in Language and Literature in Education at the Institute of Education as an evening student; her M.A. thesis was entitled *Introducing Drama to the Lower (Secondary) School*. As head of drama, Sue spends substantial amounts of time advising other English teachers on their drama teaching and regularly produces plays and musicals for the school and organizes theater visits. She also works with community theater groups.

Sue has taught for twelve years, the exchange year being her fifth year at Burlington Danes. Before coming to Burlington Danes, she taught at two other ILEA secondary schools in west London, for three to four years at each. One of these schools was Fulham Cross where she and Ellie O'Sullivan taught at the same time and where the two worked in close collaboration.

At Burlington Danes, Sue carries a heavy teaching and administrative load. The school day is divided into four 70-minute periods. Students' and teachers' schedules are constant across a week but not across a given day. In the school week, there are 20 periods, with one of these a homeroom period. With 19 periods in the teaching week, Sue taught the exchange class for four periods, three of English and one of drama. She normally teaches four classes and has three periods a week for preparation and other duties connected with her post as head of drama. Sue has a well-earned reputation for enthusiasm and energy. Agreeing to take on the audience exchange project is certainly in keeping with Sue's character, as are her valiant attempts to integrate exchange activities into a highly complex personal schedule.

Their Schools

El Cerrito High School. Built in the late 1930s, El Cerrito High School enrolls 1500 students in grades 9-12. It is in the same school district as Susan Reed's school De Anza High School (Chapter 5). El Cerrito High School is in a middle-class neighborhood, just north of Oakland and Berkeley in the overcrowded East Bay (east of and across the Bay from San Francisco). Besides drawing students from the area, it also draws lower-income students from other areas nearby.

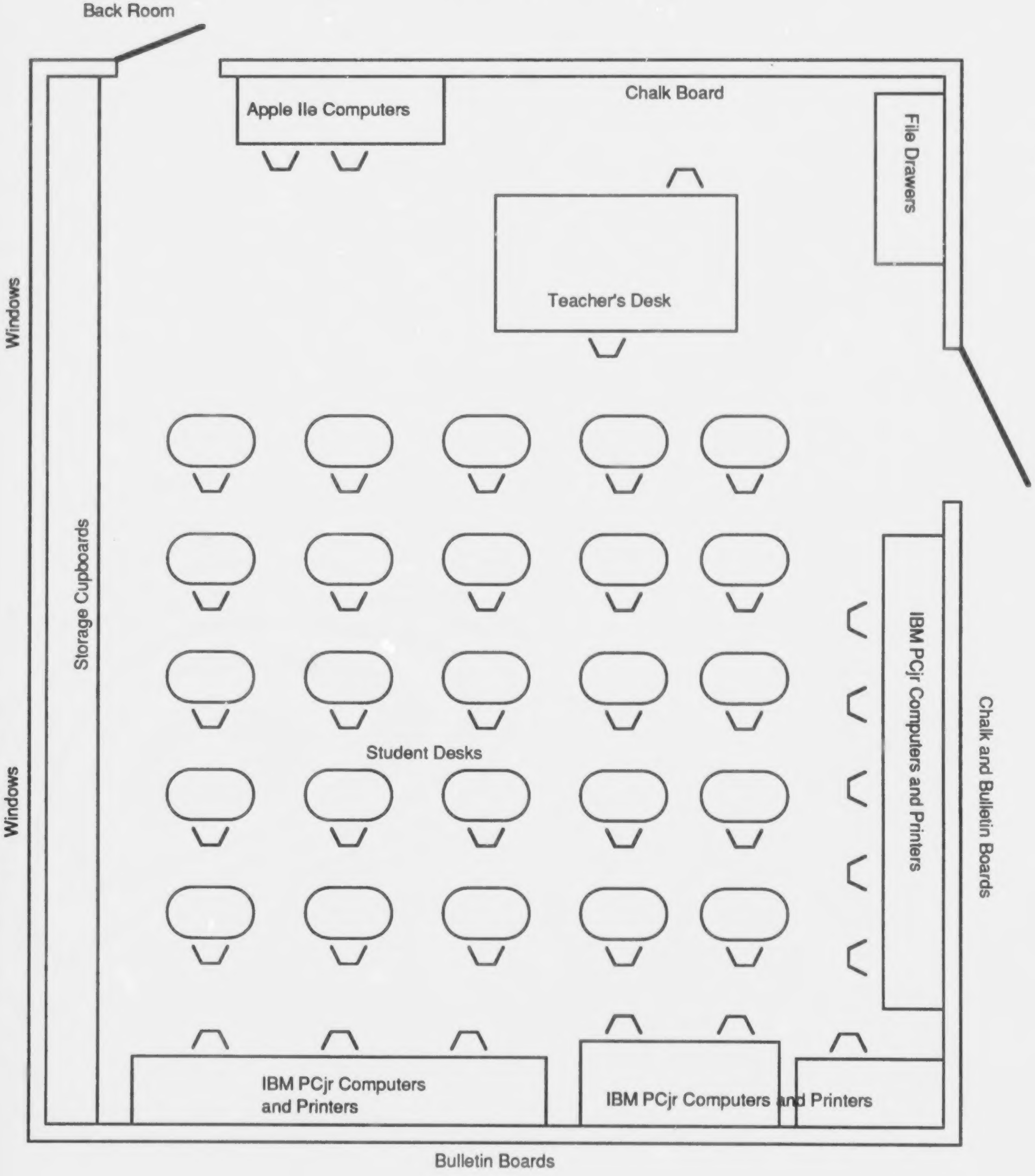
The campus is somewhat foreboding, cast of concrete, peopled with district security guards, and locked with barred gates at the end of the day. Joan's classroom is on the second floor of a side wing which is attached to a main central building by a second story walkway. Joan's room is spacious, with desks arranged in traditional rows (see Figure 6.1). The room is ringed on three sides with the 12 IBM PCjrs, on tables with a printer beside each one. When class activity begins students move their desks to fit the activity—sometimes into a whole-class circle or other times into various configurations of small groups. Joan's room is decorated with pictures of students; ads about school activities; and notices about deadlines for applications for colleges, jobs, participation in school events, and the like. Two mannequins sport El Cerrito High School t-shirts. On the back wall is a display of writing from Sue's class in England. Connecting Joan's classroom to the classroom next door is a small storage room which contains books, a sink, and a small xerox machine which Joan obtained after writing a grant proposal. On the door to the storeroom is a lifesized poster of baseball star Reggie Jackson in his Oakland As uniform.

Because of the PACT program, the tracking system was in a period of transition. During the exchange year, like most Bay Area secondary schools, classes at El Cerrito were tracked, with students in similar "ability" ranges placed together. In the English department there were honors, college preparatory, average, and low-stanine classes. The low-stanine classes generally did not carry college credit and were thought to be remedial courses for the non-college-bound. Stimulated by PACT meetings during the exchange year, administrators and teachers decided that beginning in the 1988-89 academic year, the year after the exchange, El Cerrito would modify its tracking program, with all teachers of the lower tracks able to designate any deserving students' performance as college-preparatory and give the student appropriate credit. Joan instituted this practice during the exchange year. By the next academic year, 1989-1990, the tracking system for English was modified to include only honors classes and mixed ability classes, with all classes carrying college credit. El Cerrito is beginning to experiment with this new organization for other subject areas as well.

Burlington Danes. The school where Sue Llewellyn teaches, Burlington Danes, is located between the Shepherds Bush and East Acton districts of the London Borough of Hammersmith. It serves students who can walk from adjoining neighborhoods and those who rely on public transportation, commuting as much as an hour each way by bus and subway. The neighborhood contains a mixture of middle- and working-class residential areas and commercial areas. The largest London BBC studio is down the road from the school; Hammersmith Hospital is next door, and beside the hospital is Wormwood Scrubs Prison. A railroad and major freeway pass nearby.

The environment of Burlington Danes is described vividly in the autobiographies of Sue's students, as well as in their early correspondence, as "quite busy," mentioning the hospital and prison as well as "cinemas, restaurants, pizza parlors, clothes shops," and "a lot of cars, flats [apartments]," and "lots of big playing fields" that line the DuCane Road which the school faces. While one student characterizes the area as "brilliant in my opinion," another describing the Burlington Danes locale tells his U.S. counterparts, "I hope you have a better environment."

Figure 6.1: Joan Cone's Classroom


Back Room
Apple IIe Computers
Chalk Board
File Drawers
Teacher's Desk
Windows
Storage Cupboards
Student Desks
Windows
IBM PCjr Computers and Printers
Chalk and Bulletin Boards
IBM PCjr Computers and Printers
IBM PCjr Computers and Printers
Bulletin Boards

Burlington Danes has a history that dates back almost 300 years, but it has undergone significant changes in the recent past. Its present organization was established in the 1970s when two selective Church of England grammar schools, one for girls and one for boys, amalgamated and became a non-selective co-educational school. Therefore, it enrolls students of all abilities, following the policy adopted by the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) and by the British government of admitting students of all abilities to all publicly maintained schools. Although it is still affiliated with the Church of England, it is almost entirely funded by ILEA and does not require that students' families be church members.

Its classes, which too are generally mixed in terms of student ability, are housed in the two buildings of the former selective grammar schools. Both were built in the 1930s but considerably modernized for the amalgamation. The rooms, halls, and public areas are attractive and cheerful, though the long corridors, similar to those in many high schools in the States, including El Cerrito, can be grimly institutional and are sometimes noisy. Each building has its own dining area: Burlington for the upper grades—Forms 4, 5, and 6 corresponding to U.S. grades 9, 10, and 11—and Danes for Forms 1, 2, and 3 corresponding to U.S. grades 6, 7, and 8. Burlington Danes is smaller than El Cerrito High School, with only 1100 students in the equivalent of U.S. grades 6-12. Distinguishing it from schools in the United States—but typical of British schools—Burlington Danes allows class groups, numbering 20 to 30 students, to study a subject with the same teacher for several successive years.

Sue's classroom has large windows facing south over an area of lawns and rose gardens. Double glazing protects it from the noise of the busy road in front of the school. The desks are movable, so Sue arranges them to suit the activity she plans for the day (see Figure 6.2). Often the desks are arranged for students to work in groups of four; at other times they are made into a hollow square for a whole class discussion. Sue's students can carry out this rearrangement in about one minute. On the walls she displays work from her classes and posters, mainly for films or plays of particular interest to her students.

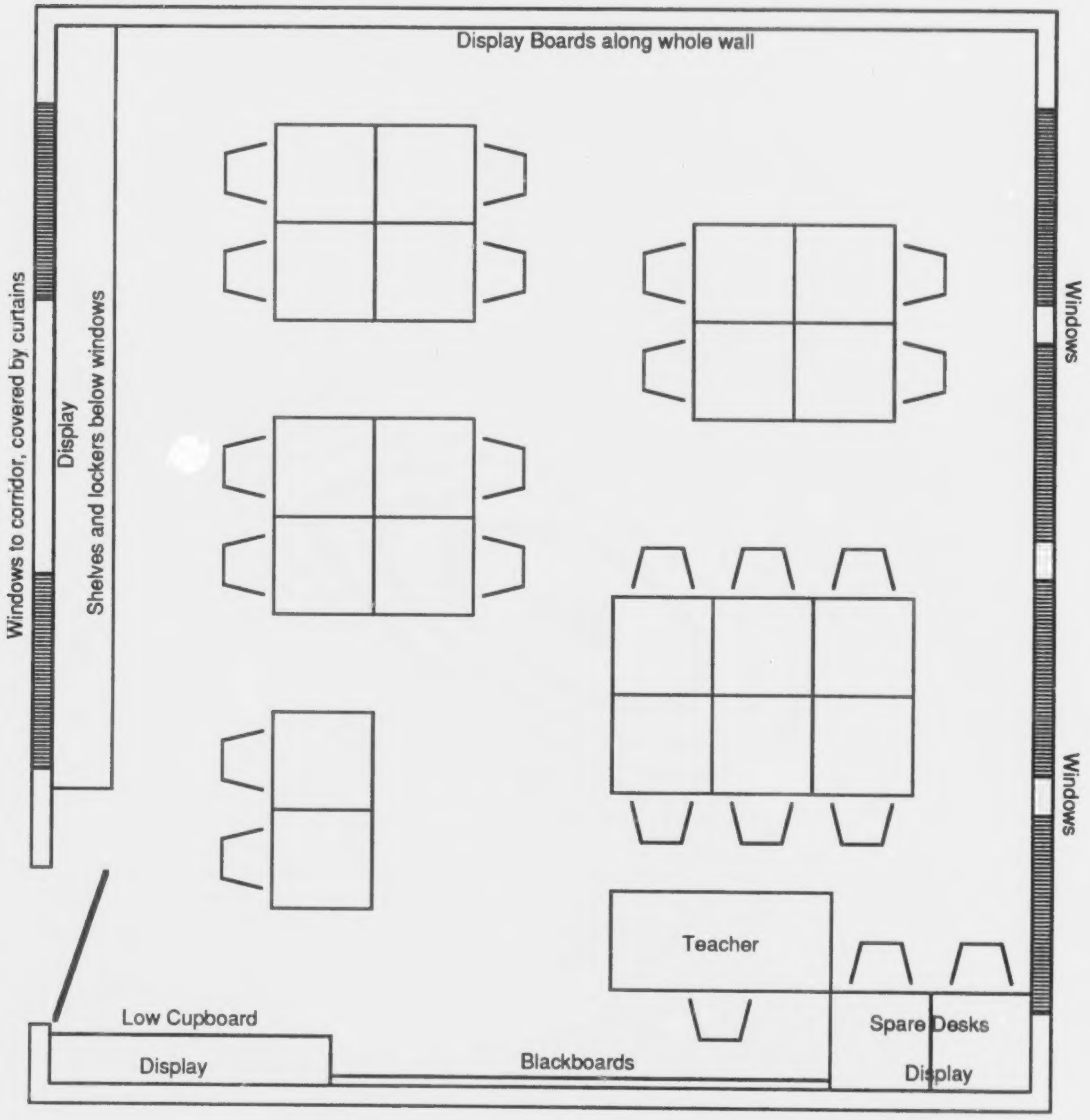
Burlington Danes is characterized by one student as "a nice school, but a bit strict," a sentiment echoed by others who resent traditional restrictions such as uniforms and associated hazing by older students. Yet the school is clearly considered a desirable one to attend; one student, for instance, reports having elected Burlington Danes, choosing it over schools that friends attended and those that had relaxed dress codes, "because it had good exam results."

Their Classes

Joan introduced the exchange in her ninth-grade English class tracked at the then lowest level, low-stanine, non-college credit. She hoped to engage these low-tracked students in academic tasks and to help them see a function and purpose for writing. According to school district officials, at the time of the exchange, student placement into the low-stanine track, as for other tracks, was made primarily on the basis of scores on the California Achievement Test, a norm-referenced test published by McGraw Hill, and secondarily on the basis of teacher recommendations which were intended to be used to move students into higher tracks than they would otherwise be placed in. Joan feels that placement into tracks also had a great deal to do with previous teachers' perceptions of the students' motivation and behavior, especially their high absentee rates. She found almost no correlation between their placement and their ability to learn.

For this class, Joan had an unusually low enrollment of only 19 students; she normally has about 32 students in a class. Having such a small group, Joan says, allowed her to manage the exchange activity and the group as a whole with relative ease and to achieve her goals for these students.

Figure 6.2: Sue Llewellyn's Classroom


Display Boards along whole wall
Windows to corridor, covered by curtains
Display
Shelves and lockers below windows
Windows
Windows
Teacher
Spare Desks
Low Cupboard
Display
Blackboards
Display

As Table 2.2 shows, while the overall student population at El Cerrito is about 46% African American, 4% other minorities, and 50% non-Hispanic white and about half male and half female, the exchange class was 68% African American (13 out of 19) and 79% male (15 out of 19), statistics typical for low-stanine classes at El Cerrito High School and elsewhere (Goodlad, 1984; Oakes, 1985; Rosenbaum, 1976). Two students, or 11%, were Chicano/Latino; and four students, or 21%, were non-Hispanic white. Thus students of color who make up 50% of the student body made up almost 80% of the lower tracked classes. And most of them were male.

Sue Llewellyn also introduced the exchange into her Form 4 (grade 9) class. By contrast to Joan's group, Sue's class was mixed ability. Sue had been this group's English teacher for three years and was now in her fourth year with them. Her class of 22, the usual size class for her, was 48% white and 52% other ethnic groups. These others were mostly black African Caribbean (8 students or 38%) and South Asian (3 students or 14 %) (see Table 2.2).

Comparing Institutional Contexts

As with the other paired classrooms described in Chapters 3, 4, and 5, a synthesis of the background data for Sue's and Joan's classes provides additional information for addressing the first research question about the institutional supports and constraints on the teaching and learning of writing in the United States and the United Kingdom. The salient differences in the greater instructional contexts will be discussed in this section, parallel to the discussion for the other pairs of teachers. The main differences between Joan's and Sue's situations include the following: (a) like the others, Joan and Sue are active professionally and take on added professional roles, with Joan's roles better integrated into the daily life of her school than is the case for most of the other U.S. teachers but with them still marginal in comparison to Sue's; (b) both Joan and Sue assume external duties that have no equivalent in the other's country; (c) the different teaching schedules and school organizations support the teachers in different ways as they get to know their students as individuals; (d) Joan's school has a tracking system that she is actively working to dismantle, while Sue's school has an established policy of mixed ability teaching; and (e) Sue teaches the first year of a GCSE examination class.

Teachers' Professional Roles: Separated or Integrated

Unlike the activities of the other U.S. teachers, Joan's extracurricular activities with PACT and the computer project are well integrated into her everyday school life. Although not part of the regular organization of her school as an the institution, the PACT program has become part of the framework in which she works. Joan herself has made it part of the framework by initiating a school-wide collaboration. Joan gets credit within her school and at the state and national levels, but because PACT is not part of the normal institutional framework and because the district office sees itself, rather than local schools and teachers, in charge of directing the change process, Joan and her colleagues sometimes feel that they do not get the credit or recognition they deserve from the district office.

Sue's extracurricular and curricular activities are part of the regular institutional life of the school. Sue's work in drama outside her classroom and outside her school context feed back into the work she does in her school as head of drama and into her classroom teaching. Like the other British teachers but unlike Joan, Sue receives salary and regularized recognition for the work she does that extends beyond the bounds of her classroom teaching.

New Professional Roles

Joan's professional role with the PACT program is one that fits with the ideals of the educational reform movement in the United States, teachers working in collaboration with their colleagues and with administrators to improve their schools. El Cerrito provides an excellent example of what school-site management could be. El Cerrito also shows the importance of teacher empowerment and the benefits of school-university collaboration. The importance of the professional roles Joan takes on seems particular to the educational context in the United States which traditionally has not supported teachers as change agents. At El Cerrito, since administrators have joined with the teachers in the change process, Joan's efforts are supported, but at the district level, there is little sense of how to handle or support school-site activism.

Like the other British teachers, Sue has regularly sanctioned roles, such as head of drama, that recognize her talents within her school and within the wider educational community.

Getting to Know Students: School and Curricular Organization

While Sue is now working with her same class for the fourth year, Joan is just meeting her new group of ninth graders. Like the other U.S. teachers, Joan does not work within a context that helps her get to know her students as individuals. The PACT program, however, does provide some support since the collaborative research project involves the team in focusing on the needs of low-achieving students and closely following the progress of these students. Also, at PACT meetings teachers have a chance to discuss their students and issues important to teaching them.

Heterogeneous versus Homogeneous Learning Communities

Like all the British classes in the exchange, Sue's group is mixed ability. Joan teaches within a tracked situation but one in the process of change. Although her class is tracked as remedial, she does not consider them remedial and is working with other teachers to provide them with challenging intellectual material and opportunities. Simultaneously, she and her colleagues are looking toward school-wide change that within only two years will lead to mixed ability classes in the school. Therefore, although currently teaching in a tracked school, Joan is teaching in a situation in transition and one in which the philosophy of tracking is under serious question and intense discussion.

Teaching an Examination Class

Like Irene Robertson in Chapter 5, Sue is teaching the first year of a two-year course for the GCSE examination. Also, like Irene, as the following sections will show, the dual audience of the exchange and the examiner creates some difficulty for Sue's students to manage, especially as the year goes on. Again, the examiner audience necessarily takes priority.

Joan speculates about her sense of the effects of the British examinations on the exchange when she summarizes her feelings about the year for O'Sullivan:

> I think there were some bugs, to tell you the truth, in this. Because I really believe in exchanges, and I would like to get a really good exchange going. But we didn't get as much as we sent . . . I know there were problems but uhm, you know, it would be really wonderful if every, you know, two months or something, you really could get a whole set of papers, and get to know them as writers, real writers. . . . I got the feeling . . . that they just kind of put other things in their folders [for the examiner], and they didn't send us those things or something, which was unfortunate, because my kids decided it was all their teacher's [Sue's] fault. (Interview, December 13, 1988)

In thinking about her own year she says, "We were very lucky because we don't have those tests. So there's nothing I felt I had to get done."

The U. S. Focal Students

We follow five focal students in Joan's class: three African American males, Easy E., Ice T., and Cool J.; and two females, Geya who is African American and Rose who is Latina.

Easy E.

Easy E. comes from a family with roots in California. As he writes in his autobiography, "The one thing I think that makes my house very special is that my grandfather built it." The youngest of three children, he lives with his parents and his older brother and sister. Easy E.'s best friend is Ice T. The two of them sit together in class, do a lot of their work together, and even write about one another. Popular and sociable, Easy E. also loves sports. He plays football and basketball and runs track. Easy E. wants to go to college; but atypical for his peer group, he says in his last interview:

> I want to go somewhere kind of far. . . . I just want to get away from home. . . . When something happens, I can't just run back to my mother, or whatever. I just have to face it. . . . I could just—just adjust or whatever. (Interview, June 10, 1988)

For the exchange, Easy E. puts on a "different persona," that of a rapper, something Joan says is not at all like his formal school personality. She describes Easy E. as "probably the most hard-working, really concerned-about-school kid in the class" (Interview, April 24, 1988).

Ice T.

Like his best friend Easy E., Ice T. is the youngest child in his family; however, Ice T. has four older siblings. He lives in a middle-class neighborhood with his mother and stepfather who is a graduate of the University of California at Berkeley's Boalt Law School. Ice T.'s greatest interest, like Easy E.'s, is sports, but according to Joan, Ice T. is shy about becoming involved. For example, she says, "He wants to go out for a sport but he doesn't know which sport to go out for" (Interview, February 24, 1988). Beyond sports, though, Ice T. loves popular music, in particular rap. Opening his autobiography with an original rap composition involving both family members and friends, he announces the adopted persona of his alias, rap performer Ice T., a voice that he maintains throughout the exchange. Also, Joan says that Ice T., like Easy E., is playing with this rap persona and that he also does not usually display his rapper side in class. Both Easy E. and Ice T. seem to treat the exchange as a performance opportunity, a place they can try out other ways of being, where they can together explore their identities, where they can play—with each other, with the British students, and with their own senses of self.

Cool J.

Cool J. is the third and youngest child of a locally prominent black minister. Cool J. is proud of his family, including his father; his mother, a bookkeeper at the University of California, Berkeley; and his older brother about whom he writes in his autobiography:

> My brother is 22 years old. He is the best basketball player in the world. He is a senior at Sacramento State University and the starting guard on the basketball team. I hope he is good enough to play pro-basketball. I think he is, but I am not a pro coach.

Cool J. himself is also especially interested in sports and writes in his autobiography of a cousin who has achieved substantial success in the sports world and who, in addition to his brother, seems to serve as a role model for him:

> Not many people like baseball because they think it is a boring sport. It is something I could never get tired of playing. My cousin plays pro baseball for the Milwaukee Breweres. That shows how popular baseball is in the family.

Cool J. is active socially, with interests in "parties, movies, church, school, and ball games." Among his most prized activities are to "talk to girls, and to be with my friends." His mother used to work at El Cerrito High, and Joan says that Cool J. knows the school and is "very sure of himself" (Interview, April 27, 1988). About his writing, she reveals, "He sees writing as a way, a bit of a way, of showing off." According to Joan, Cool J.'s writing skill, although not great, is "certainly better than most of the kids in the class." But orally, she says, "He's the most articulate kid in the class" (Interview, April 27, 1988).

Geya

Geya, by her own description, is a sensitive and devout "black Afro-American." She lives with her younger brother and her mother, who was also a student of Joan's and who became pregnant with Geya while she was still in high school. Geya's mother is protective of her only daughter because she is fearful that the fate of teenage pregnancy that was her own could also be her daughter's. For this reason, when Geya was invited to enroll in a summer program for Upward Bound students at the University of California, Geya's mother, not wanting Geya off in a university dormitory, refused to allow her to attend. In fact Geya complains in an April 19 letter to her British friends:

> Now let me tell you about my home life. Well I have this terrific opportunity to go to UC Berekely CAL for the summer and I would have to stay there for a week. Every Friday afternoon everyone gets to go home to visit thier family and wash their clothes or what ever. They also get to stay home for the whole weekend. My mother wouldn't let me go because she said that she isn't going to go for that s_i_. She also said that she wanted me to stay at home with her, and she didn't want me to leave until it was or is time. Now you know that isn't even right.

According to Joan, Geya is "the exact opposite of Cool J." Geya is relatively quiet, shy, and studious and although not without friends, keeps herself somewhat apart from the other students in the class. Joan believes that Geya is a talented writer and student and continues, "She probably reads more than any kid in the room" (Interview, April 24, 1988).

Rose

Rose describes herself as generally shy and especially "self-conscious" about her height. In her autobiography she admits:

> I am also the smallest of my whole family! That I don't like but there's nothing that I can do about it and it really bothers me because a lot of people tease me abouit being so short. I'm only 4'11"! My doctor said that I wouldn't grow anymore.

Rose has only one sibling, a brother who is 14 years older than she is and who no longer lives at home. Rose lives alone with her mother who has serious health problems and relies heavily on Rose's care. Rose's friends are not in Joan's class but rather are older boys and kids she knows from her involvement in the school band where she plays the trumpet, an instrument she has played for over six years. Joan characterizes Rose as "comfortable in the class and the kids like her, but she's not connected to any kids really." Joan finds that Rose is similarly disconnect with the British audience. She sees herself as someone who is "informing, teaching them about Americans." Joan also sees Rose as "more mature than the other kids" (Interview, April 24, 1988). Rose reports that she volunteers for a program in the community that "teaches the students the effect that drugs can have on your body." During Rose's first interview, we also found that she is deeply involved in an underground letter writing group. While she was being interviewed, another student delivered a letter to Rose, and when the interviewer asked about the letter, Rose revealed:

> Ever since I got into junior high me and my friends were never in the same classes anymore. So we had to do a lot of letter writing to talk to each other. And um, that really worked. . . . People think I can write pretty well when it comes to letters and stuff. (Interview, March 2, 1988)

When asked how she and her friends exchange these letters, Rose continues:

> I usually see all my friends in the morning and then I have letters for them. They have letters for me and then we exchange them. And then we see each other at lunch and we exchange letters again.

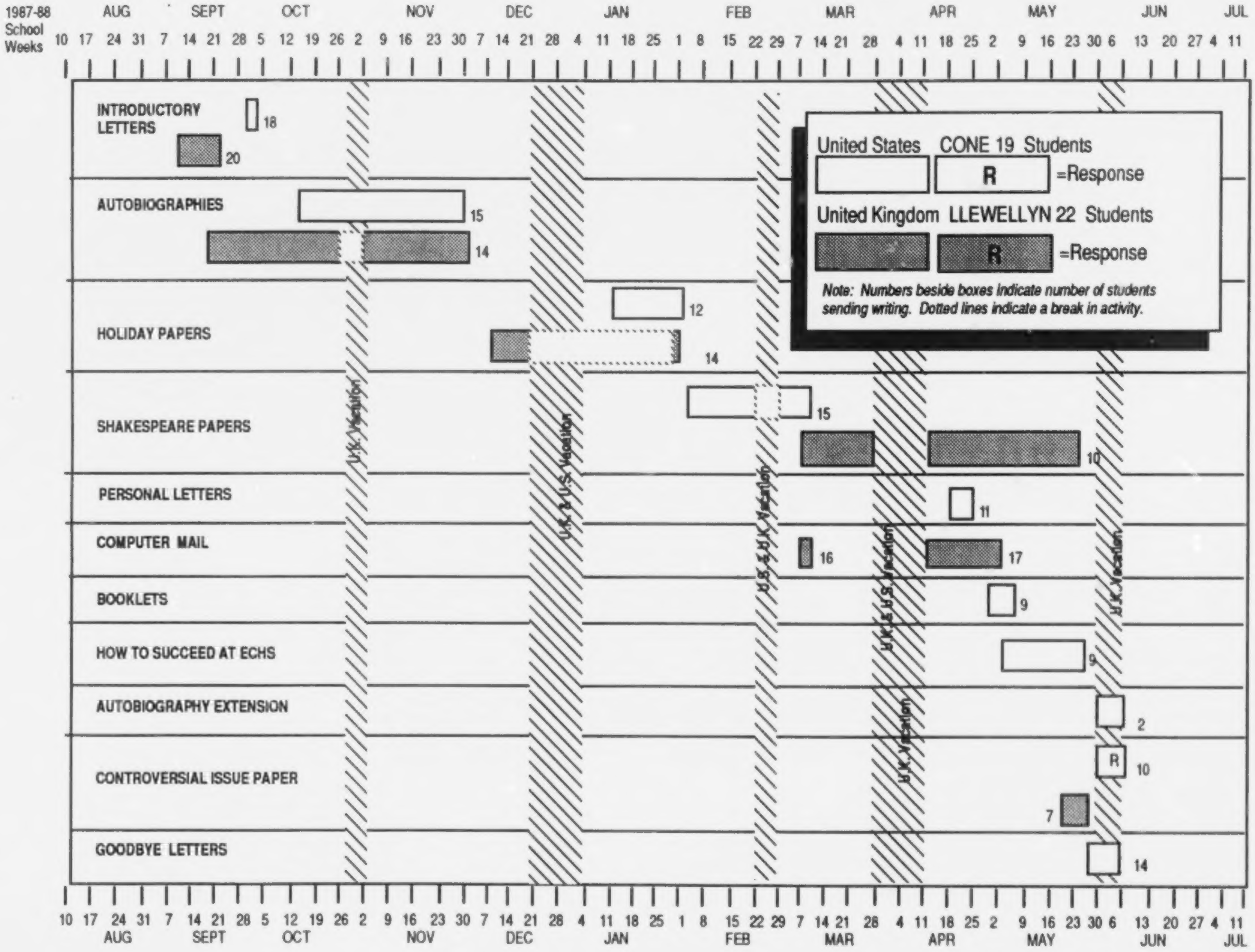
Rose reports that she usually writes these letters at home. Joan does not know about the letter writing but does inform us that Rose often is writing "notes" when she should be paying attention in class. Many of Rose's friends are in honors classes, but because of her mother's health, Rose's attendance is erratic and Joan believes that it is for this reason that she has not been placed in these more advanced classes. Joan sees Rose, like many of the students in the class, as "a perfect product of, um inferior education. . . . I mean all of these kids I really believe have learned what they've been taught"; according to Joan, they haven't been taught much, other than that little is expected of them (Interview, April 24, 1988).

Overview for the Exchange

Just as Susan and Irene's exchange worked well for Susan's group with minimal communication between the two teachers, the same is the case for Joan and Sue. Joan takes the lead in trying to establish good communication; although she writes to Sue in early September, telephones her later in the month, and writes again in October, Sue does not write back until the first of December. By this point, Joan has given up on trying to maintain regular correspondence. They each send one other letter in mid-February. In these letters, which cross in the mail, Sue and Joan anticipate the need to plan the second-semester exchange projects. However, that planning never occurs. Although told early in the year about the U.S. school calendar, without the reminders that are a normal part of regular communication, Sue finds herself thinking that she has more time left to send work at the end of the year than she in fact has since the school year in the States ends a month and a half before the British year ends.

Timeline

Figure 6.3 graphs the flow of writing between Joan's and Sue's classes. The first part of the year shows a parallel sequence of planned exchanges: introductory letters, autobiographies, and holiday papers. In the later part of the year, Sue's students send computer mail in March and May, and controversial issues papers that arrive in June. At the same time, they also send Shakespeare papers. In the second part of the year, Joan's students get their Shakespeare papers in the mail in early March. They then do, on average, two of three other major but independent projects: myth and adventure stories which they compile into booklets, pieces about how to succeed at El Cerrito High School, and extensions to their autobiographies. Some of Joan's students also respond with essays of their own to the controversial issues papers from England (more of Joan's students respond than Sue's students write). In addition, most members of Joan's class send good-bye letters. As Figure 6.3 shows, Sue's students write more regularly for the exchange at the start of the year than in the second semester, while Joan's students increase their output as the year goes on.


1987-88 School Weeks
AUG SEPT OCT NOV DEC JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL
10 17 24 31 7 14 21 28 5 12 19 26 2 9 16 23 30 7 14 21 28 4 11 18 25 1 8 15 22 29 7 14 21 28 4 11 18 25 2 9 16 23 30 6 13 20 27 4 11
INTRODUCTORY LETTERS
18
20
AUTOBIOGRAPHIES
15
14
HOLIDAY PAPERS
12
14
SHAKESPEARE PAPERS
15
10
PERSONAL LETTERS
11
COMPUTER MAIL
16
17
BOOKLETS
9
HOW TO SUCCEED AT ECHS
9
AUTOBIOGRAPHY EXTENSION
2
CONTROVERSIAL ISSUE PAPER
R
10
7
GOODBYE LETTERS
14
U.K. Vacation
U.K. & U.S. Vacation
U.S. & U.K. Vacation
U.K. & U.S. Vacation
U.K. Vacation
U.K. Vacation
United States CONE 19 Students
R =Response
United Kingdom LLEWELLYN 22 Students
R =Response
Note: Numbers beside boxes indicate number of students sending writing. Dotted lines indicate a break in activity.

Word Counts

As with all the other classes, except Judy Logan's "gifted" group, even though Joan's students send more packages, the British students write longer individual pieces (see Table 6.1). We completed word counts for the focal students' autobiographies and Shakespeare papers.

Organizing the Exchange

Melding the Exchange with the Regular Curriculum: Taking Over or Adding On. Just as Susan Reed completely gives over her course to the exchange, so does Joan Cone. Throughout the year, the exchange takes a central place in Joan's classroom. Unlike many teachers, Joan does not feel constrained by school-district or state-wide curriculum requirements. Nor does she find that the exchange exerts extra pressure on her time. In fact, she is able to take full advantage of the opportunities afforded by the exchange, free to use it as a major ingredient in support of the way she teaches writing. The exchange and her approach to teaching become entirely complementary. As Joan states emphatically to Ellie O'Sullivan from the U.K. team, the exchange "really fit in" (Interview, December 13, 1988). Joan's students send a steady stream of writing to England, and the quality of her students' writing increases markedly across the year as Joan's students find their voices and come to know their teacher and peer audiences.

By contrast, Sue, who is teaching an examination course, adds the exchange on, just as Irene Robertson (Chapter 5) does. Even though Sue does not have to contend with the strike as Irene does, she still has to worry about merging the exchange audience with the examiner audience. She speaks about some of the difficulty as she describes how her students react when writing for their examination folders:

> The kids didn't feel that confident about really baring their souls in an assignment that was going to go off to an examiner even though they knew that I was one of the examiners. They knew that beyond me there was an unknown quantity. (Interview, April 20, 1989)

Sue then explains how the examination impacted the exchange:

> I was very worried that at the end of the fifth year if I stuck to our program [the exchange] I was going to end up with insufficient work for the folders and that was a major cause of panic. (Interview, April 20, 1989)

Much like Irene, in addition to the examination, Sue works hard to introduce computers into the exchange, an activity that proves logistically complex and inordinately time-consuming. In the end, the computers actually seem to get in the way of Sue's class's contribution to the exchange. As Sue concludes about the computer work, "I actually felt in the end that we were spending far too much time, and getting very little on paper in return which frustrated me" (Interview, April 20, 1989). By contrast, Joan had been part of a university collaboration with computers and had had enough support in the previous year to be able to use them with relative ease during the exchange year. Her students also have easy access to machines in their classroom.

Adding the exchange to an already full curriculum, as well as difficulties integrating the computer work, depresses the flow of exchange writing that comes from Sue's class, especially as the year goes on and as the examination gets closer. In Joan's class, as is the case in Susan Reed's class in Chapter 4, the decreased writing from England does not have a significant effect on the writing Joan's students do. Although Joan and her students would have liked a steadier flow of writing from Sue's group and although Joan would have liked more regular communication with Sue, the slow-down in the second semester and the minimal correspondence between the teachers in no way prevents the successful functioning of the exchange in Joan's class. Joan expends her energy making the opportunities provided by the exchange maximally productive for the students

Table 6.1
Autobiography and Shakespeare:

US/UK Focal Students' Word Counts

		AUTO-BIOGRAPHIES	SHAKESPEARE	TOTAL WORDS FOR EACH FOCAL STUDENT
CONE	Easy E	565	659	1,224
	Ice T	410	480	890
	Cool J	1,171	450	1,621
	Geya	886	2,601	3,487
LLEWELLYN	**Andi/ Garney**	**1,860**	**901**	**2,761**
	Joshua	**2,352**	**1,136**	**3,488**
	Tootsie	**2,525**	**2,706**	**5,231**
	Garney/ Marisa	**2,677**	**763**	**3,440**
TOTAL, CONE FOCAL STUDENTS		3,032	4,190	7,222
TOTAL, LLEWELLYN FOCAL STUDENTS		**9,414**	**5,506**	**14,920**

in her own class. Her efforts, coupled with highly engaging writing from the British students early in the year and some engaging writing later on, prove to be enough to sustain the attention and interest of Joan's students for the entire year.

Establishing Social Links. As the unfolding story of the exchange will show, Joan is a master at framing exchange activities in ways that integrate the social with the academic aspects of her students' lives. From the start of the year, Sue's class comes alive for Joan's students, acting as an invisible part of their peer network. Since the popular British students can only be reached through writing, literacy activities take on an important and immediate function that becomes a full part of peer interests and needs. School-sponsored literacy activities are often not sanctioned by the peer group for the predominantly African American and male students who populate Joan's class (Ogbu, 1990; Reed, 1988). Thus, the exchange in this classroom provides a model for how to engage these students and help them increase their literacy skills. Through the experience of Joan's students, the importance of the social links to academic success become strikingly clear.

It is important to note that neither Joan nor Sue makes formal response to the writing from abroad a part of the exchange. However, embedded in the students' regular writing and informally in individual notes that may be sporadically attached to a teacher's letter, the students manage to respond to one another. They do not respond with direct evaluation, but they let the students from abroad know that they appreciate particular pieces, generally by extending an experience initiated in the writing they have read from the other class. With similar extensions of their experience embedded in the British students' writing, Joan's students know that their writing is read and that their ideas are taken seriously.

Writing for the Exchange

The length of each piece of writing sent by the focal students in Joan's class is presented on Table 6.2. Across the entire exchange Joan's students send more writing than any U.S. group except Judy Logan's. Remarkably, Geya, who is tracked "remedial," writes more words for the exchange than any other student in any class in the United States.

Introductory Letters

The first writing for the year in both Sue's and Joan's classes are letters of introduction. Although not planned as major pieces for the exchange, the letters Joan's students receive play a central role in establishing the social foundation for this exchange and thereby in shaping the initial positive attitudes towards it in Joan's class. Joan and Sue decide to send these letters during their September telephone conversation. They just want to get some communication off quickly while the students are working on their next more serious and more long-term exchange project, the autobiographies.

The Writing. Table 6.2 indicates that the letters from Joan's class are brief. When they write their letters, Joan's students have not yet received anything from England. At this point, her students, according to Joan, play it safe. As Joan recalls in her interview with Ellie O'Sullivan, "They wrote in a very safe, kind of formal letters. . . . That's just how they felt that they were supposed to write" (Interview, December 13, 1988). As Easy E. confirms, "I mean people were, we were at first, um, we were like tightened, tightened up, you know" (Interview, March 21,

Table 6.2
Number of Words

	EASY E	ICE T.	COOL J.	GEYA	ROSE
INTRO LETTERS	165	261	210	243	150
AUTOBIOGRAPHIES	565	410	1,171	886	609
HOLIDAY PAPERS	287	209	407	238	247
SHAKESPEARE PAPERS	659	480	450	2,601	596
LETTERS	154	152	134	1,047	366
BOOKLET	307	----	----	1,630	239
HOW TO SUCCEED AT ECHS	----	323	270	422	----
CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES PAPERS	----	347	----	628	----
GOODBYE LETTERS	291	216	310	565	----
TOTAL	2,428	2,398	2,952	8,260	2,207

1988). Indeed, Easy E.'s letter seems tight:

> September 29, 1987
>
> Dear Girls and Boys in England,
>
> My name is Easy E. and I am 14 years old and I love to play sports like football, basketball, and track.
>
> I've played football and run track for a team but I've never played basketball for a team.
>
> At El Cerrito High School we have a football team, swim team, and a track team.
>
> I would like for you to tell me something about your school. I would like to know if you have any hobbies like buliding model cars and airplanes.
>
> Here at El Cerrito High School we've got to have a 2.0 grade average to play any kind of sports in high school.
>
> I would like to know if any of you girls or guys have any plans to come to America and visited.
>
> I would like to know something you think that makes your school special. Here at El Cerrito High School we have our own radiostation.
>
> Your friend...
>
> Easy E.

Cool J.'s letter is similar in tone, beginning:

> Dear England,
>
> Hello my name is Cool J. but my friends and family call me J. or J.J. I am 14 yds old I was born at Kaiser Permantente in Oakland, California. I live with both my parents.

After explaining that his father is a minister, he writes about his mother, "My mother is the sweetest lady I know. Sometimes she bugs me, but I still love her." Cool J. concludes by giving some information about the area:

> The Bay Area is a fun place to live. El Cerrito is only 15-miles from San Francisco, and only 365-miles from Hollywood. The Bay Area has a lot of things to do, such as pro-football, pro-baseball and pro-baskeball. We have 3 nearby fun parks.
>
> We have, one of the finest wine countries in the country. I am realy looking forward to your letter.

In his first paragraph, Ice T. provides the usual information about himself, using a stream of consciousness organization. He discusses his name and its origins, then moves to his hobbies and extracurricular activities, then to a description of where he lives, then to a description of his mom, then to his age and where he goes to school, then to his siblings, and finally to his birthdate and what he got for his latest birthday. Ice T.'s last paragraph focuses on questions for the British students:

> I have told you a few things about myself now I would like to know a few thing about you and England.
>
> 1. Do you have a McDonalds?
> 2. Do you listion to rap music?
> 3. What kind of sports do you play?

4. Do you play football?
5. What kind of classes do you have?
6. What is your name?
7. How old are you?
8. What are your hobbies?
9. What kind of T.V. shows do you like to watch?
10. What city do you live in?
11. Do you play an instrument?
12. What are your goals in life?

Those are some thing I would like to know.

Your truly
Ice T.

Rose writes a similar letter, beginning with information about herself but concluding with her own list of questions:

Here are some questions that I have.

1. What do you do in your spare time.
2. do any of you play an instrument? if so what?
3. How do people dress in your school?
4. are you sending pictures to us of yourselves?

Rose ends with her signature and her home address.

Slightly more adventurous than the other students, Geya writes:

September 29, 1987

Hi, My name is Geya Anderson but mostly everyone at home and school calls me Gey. I am a black afro American and I am 5 ft. $2\frac{1}{2}$. I have black hair that goes down to my neck. When I was small I had very long hair but as I grew up it kind of broke off. Most of the time I still wish I had long hair but I know that if I keep it up my wish just might come true. I am fourteen and I was born August 1, 1973.

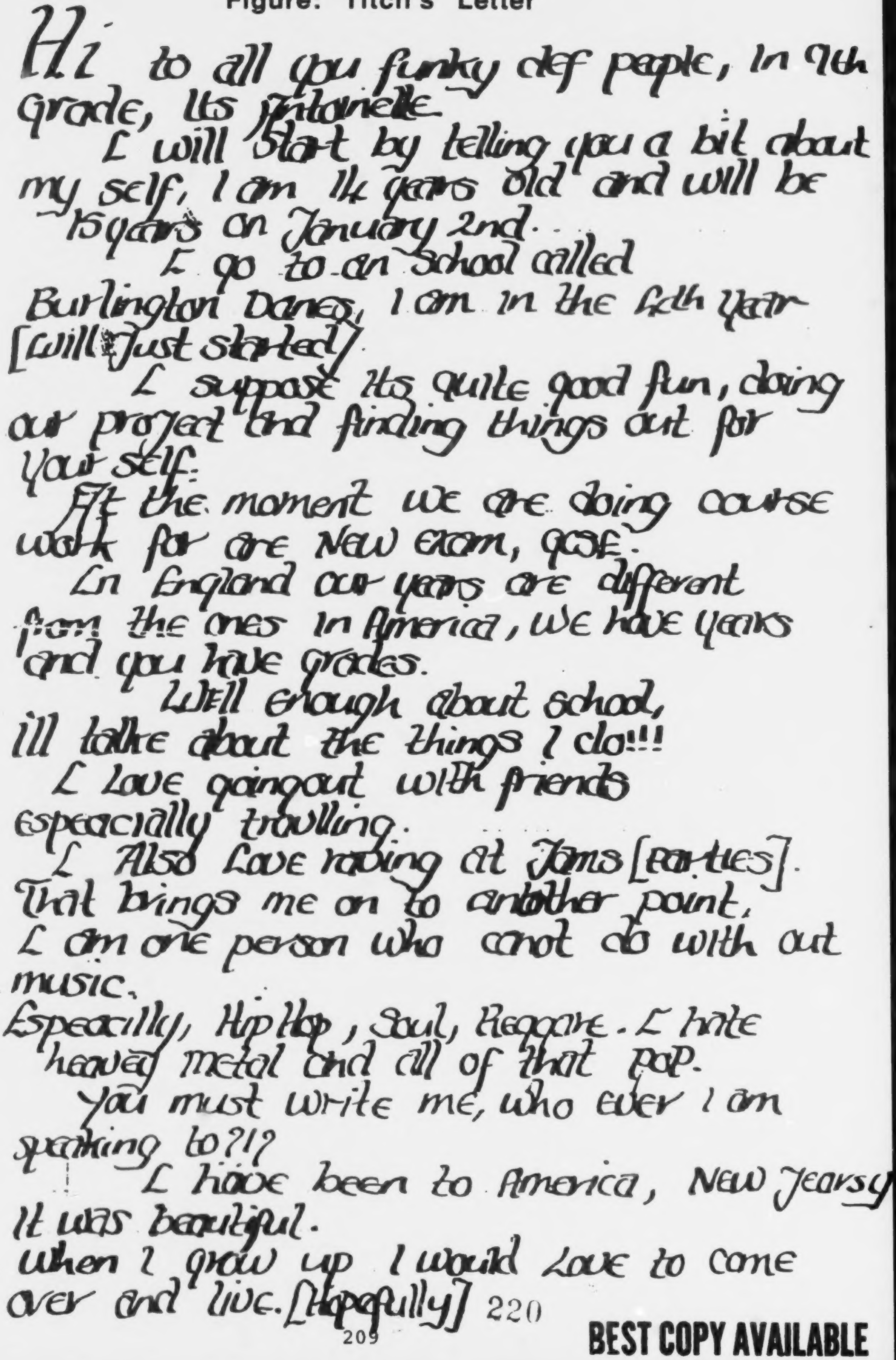
I have one brother and he is nine year old, He name is D. He was born july 21, 1978. My Mother's Name is the best that my brother and I could ever have because she get on us when we are wrong and compliment us when we are doing good. My Mom wants to see my brother and me with a beautiful education and terrific jobs that we can ever have. She wants us with the best in the world. You know I would like to ask you something now if I am kind of making you angry then I apologize but I would like to know if you have any black people out there. The reason I am asking is because I only see the other color on T.V. and I was just curious.

I hope to talk to us soon. Well by, Nice talking to you

Sincerely yours,
Geya Anderson

Cool J. sums up his class's initial sense of the British audience at this point: "They're so far away, I was thinking of them of like aliens" (Interview, March 10, 1988).

Figure: Titch's Letter



Hi to all you funky def people, In 9th Grade, Its Antoinette

I will start by telling you a bit about my self, I am 14 years old and will be 15 years on January 2nd...

I go to an School called Burlington Danes, I am in the 5th Year [will Just started]

I suppose Its quite good fun, doing our project and finding things out for your self.

At the moment we are doing course work for are New exam, GCSE.

In England our years are different from the ones in America, we have years and you have grades.

Well enough about school, ill talke about the things I do!!!

I Love goingout with friends especially travlling.

I Also Love raving at Jams [parties]. That brings me on to anbther point, I am one person who canot do with out music.

Especailly, Hip Hop, Soul, Reggare. I hate heavey metal and all of that pop.

You must write me, who ever I am speaking to?!?

I have been to America, New Jearsy It was beautiful.

When I grow up I would Love to come over and live. [Hopefully]

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

England is not bad, I suppose most of the time Its pretty cold, Apart from that Its okay

Oh before I forget I am also an freaky person, well me and my causon Lola she is in the same class and is also writting a letter to you all. We wear really freaky outfits, As for the hair, our hair, well thats freaky too.

I do suppose your freaky too who ever you are?

I have got an Tag, It is Pride thats what I am know as

Anyway, I will hope
I'll here from you.
I leve my Address
again.
Lov ya

xx

PRIDE!

The British letters have a more casual tone. Especially powerful in engendering Joan's students' enthusiasm is the following letter from Titch, in rather fancy calligraphy:

Reception of the British Writing: Finding Common Ground. Joan's students find much to connect with as they hear the voices of real people who share their interests and whom they begin to think of as potential friends. Titch masterfully establishes common ground with Joan's students—through her use of language, her musical tastes, her love of parties, and even her love of the United States. Titch makes herself so likeable and real that many of the ninth-grade boys in Joan's class fall in love with her, quite literally, and several of the girls in Joan's class become jealous. No teacher could have given the academic plans for the exchange as effective an endorsement as Titch does when she writes, "I suppose it's quite good fun, doing our project and finding things out for your self"; or when she pleads, "You must write me, who ever I am speaking to?!?"

Easy E. stresses the importance of Titch's letter as well as several other British letters to his class's attitudes and to their immediate comfort and identification with this new audience:

> At first . . . I wasn't really interested . . . I guess everybody, you know, we just took it like an assignment . . . We gotta do this for a grade. . . . She [Joan] explained it, but I guess we didn't really catch on until after, you know, we got letters from England, and everybody was like wow! . . . So we really like got into it, and we started telling them about like what we do out here, and it was really fun. But like in the first beginning, you know, I guess we were just like . . . we'll do what she says cause that's, you know, what she wants.
>
> . . . .
>
> The way they wrote their letters, it was really like, I mean, they were our friends, and we didn't even really meet them. I mean, it was, you know, they were talking to us, and I was like, I mean, you know, I never expected nothing like it.
>
> . . . .
>
> They did basically what what we did but it was just, you know, they were in a different country and stuff. And it was just like, you know, it was another me over there. (Interview, March 21, 1988)

Like Easy E., his friends Cool J. and Ice T. also discuss feeling an immediate closeness to the students in England once these letters arrive. Cool J. goes a step further to emphasize the positive effects on his writing: "Now I feel like I know some of the people over there—you just open up and write to them" (Interview, March 10, 1988).

Geya and Rose's initial response is more cautious than the boys'. Loners in their own class, these two girls take some time to warm up to the students from abroad. Although less "tight" than Easy E. in her first letter, Geya begins the year feeling much more comfortable with Joan as an audience than with her peers in her own class or with the students in England. Joan explains:

> From the very first she [Geya] wrote really long things. Now that's not true of her papers for them [the British students]. But when she writes stories for me, or she writes summaries or something, she really takes her time.
>
> . . . .

> She's just terrifically shy, and that's very inhibiting with her writing when she's writing for somebody else, but when she's writing for me, I think she really, she wants to please me a lot. (Interview, February 24, 1988)

Rose's caution, on the other hand, comes from another source. While Joan and the research team see the exchange as important in helping the students learn to meet the needs of a general and distant audience, Rose is looking for new pen-pals. After receiving the first British letters, she informs the researchers:

> I have pen pals of my own.
>
> . . . .
>
> I have one in Missouri, one in Ventura, and one in Florida.
>
> . . . .
>
> I was hoping that Ms. Cone would do was that later on in the year um like write a letter to the teacher asking would it be okay if um we individually corresponded with the students in the class outside of school, and then send like a list with their names and addresses and then we could pick whoever we want and do the same thing with them. So that even after school got out we could still talk to each other and, you know, maybe hopefully visit one or two of them during the summer. (Interview, March 2, 1988).

Rose knows well the kinds of personal connections that can be initiated and maintained through letters, not just through her previous experiences with pen pals but also through her writing to her peers at her school. From the start, Rose's goals and the goals for the exchange are not in synchrony. Although Rose participates, she never feels satisfied that she is establishing the personal connections she wants.

Reception of U.S. Writing in Great Britain. According to the British research team, Geya's question about whether or not there are blacks in England and her comment about the absence of black people on English television provokes a profound discussion in Sue's class about the representation of blacks on British television. The British class returns to this theme many times during the year. Geya's question proves to be an important step towards the growth in friendship and understanding between the black students in the two classes. However, Sue also explains that the positive reception of Titch's letter creates a set of difficult problems for her:

> There was some resentment that was built up, the attention or rather the response that Titch's piece gained was so total that a lot of the other kids felt negated and particularly umm the white girls, Reg and Andi. . . . they felt that there really wasn't a place for them in this exchange, that there wasn't someone at the other end of the computer that they really umm had an affinity with. So they did to a large extent opt out. They started off I think by thinking, "Well perhaps we'll go along with it," but then they just decided no, they'd opt out. (Interview, April 20, 1989)

In addition, Sue says that problems also emerge for Titch:

> She was getting a lot of response to what for her was a very good piece of work but that wasn't saying that this was a piece of work that was going to, back in the exam situation, give her a C or above, and so I had to give her a sense of "Yes this has got a wonderful reception," but it didn't mean . . . . I was saying to the kids, "There are two audiences." What was giving you an overwhelming response from your audience in American is not going to gain favor . . . from um the examiners. (Interview, April 20, 1989)

Conclusions. At this early point in the year, the students in Joan's class are working to get to know their distant audience. Although the different students already indicate that they will take different routes, each is moving in a definite and positive direction. Just as response to individuals can create situations in which students feel left out as is the case in Judy Logan's class, so too in Sue Llewellyn's class we see how response to the group, when individuals are singled out, also creates situations in which students feel left out. In some sense, the difficulties of being a teenager are being acted out in the academic arena. Once the social network is activated in the service of learning, teachers must monitor closely the effects on the individual students, intervening where necessary to make the experience maximally positive for all.

Autobiographies

In her first letter to Sue in early September, Joan writes, "Since I plan to begin the year with a unit on getting to know ourselves and our various roles in the family, the school, and the community, I thought the first exchange could be a personal narrative or reflective personal essay about a significant event or person." Soon thereafter, when Joan and Sue talk on the telephone, they decide this piece will take the form of an autobiography. In her October letter Joan confirms her understandings about the autobiography: "I take it from our phone conversation that these projects are more than mere personal histories, but include short essays on neighborhoods, school activities, and family interests as well."

As with the other classes, students, in their interviews, have an opportunity to talk in some detail about the way they produce these autobiographies and their feelings about them.

The Writing. The autobiographies represent a major effort for Joan's students, with different students able to manage pieces of different scope but with all feeling highly successful and proud of their work. The focal students' autobiographies range in length from 410 words for Ice T.'s to 1,166 for Cool J.'s, the longest in the class (see Table 6.1 and 6.2). The autobiographies include descriptions of neighborhoods, schools, and families. All focal students except Rose attach photos, with Cool J. including 12 pages from what appears to be his family's album. All sport fancy covers crafted in computer graphics.

Cool J.'s autobiography, the most elaborate, begins with Cool J. describing his family with pride and detail. For example, about his mother he writes:

> She used to work here at El Cerrito High School. She worked here for 10 year, but they laid her off. She made good friends here and grew to like working at the high school. A lot of her friends still work here so I can't get in too much trouble.

And about his sister who is now in college he tells, "She is real good with kids. At church when babies are crying she has away of making them stop." Cool J. next turns to the places he has lived and characterizes each neighborhood. About his first neighborhood, he observes, "Now there is a lot of dope there." Cool J. also refers to other students in his class who now live in areas his family has moved from:

> You will also hear Rio talk about John F. Kennedy Manor. I was real young when I live there, but my mother told me that it was real nice in there. Now if the people who live in there don't know you, you take a big chance of getting mugged when you go there.

When explaining his interests, after discussing sports, Cool J. reveals that he likes to cook:

> Cooking is something I took up about 2 years ago. I always liked to cook, but never really could. I watched my mother and grandmother while they cooked and kind of took notes.

> My mother gets home from work about 6 o'clock and sometimes she is real tired. That's when I cook or we eat out. What I don't understand is why my sister doesn't cook. She says it's because she doesn't feel like it.

He then moves on to what he says is one of his favorite topics, girls:

> Girls are something "I MASTER". Right now I don't have a girlfriend, but there are hell of girls that like me. I don't mean to brag, but if you got it then you've got it.

Cool J. concludes with a relatively informal paragraph about his friends, followed by a discussion of the fun he has going to church and to games and movies with his father. He concludes that "there are a lot of good looking girls" at his school.

Rose opens with a friendly tone, "Well hello Again!" and then marks the topic of her first paragraph, "Let me tell you a little about myself." Interspersed with facts about her height and her extracurricular activities are personal details about how she feels about being short and how she took up the trumpet as a way to overcome her shyness. She ends with a paragraph about her volunteer work "counseling children now with a community group." She ends with a description of her current activities with this program:

> Right now in our school is Drug Awareness Week. This is the one week that the student body gets to show how we can say no. And since we know better than most junior high school strudents, only because we have already gone through it and we saw what it did to some of our friends. We don't want it to happen to the next group of kids. So we take out one day a week and go and talk to these kies about saying no and making the right decisions.

Ice T. opens with a rap, something he suspects will appeal to the British students:

> *ENGLAND*
>
> THE ICE
> AUTO
> BY:
> ICE T
>
> THE ENGLISH RAP
>
> I was born son of Thomas, brother of Tom,
> Ida's my mom and Easy E.'s my pal.
> It's mac T's not Mac Tegre,
> these rhymes are Walters and they'll last forever.

Ice T. then titles his first section, "THE FIRST SIDE," likely modeling this framing after NWA's (Niggas with Attitude's) rap record.[1] This record labels the first side, "Radio Side" and the second, "Street Side." "Radio Side" is the more formal and proper, while "Street Side" is the more familiar. Ice T.'s "First Side" is factual. He begins: "I was born on July 21st, 1973, in Kaiser Hospital in Oakland, California. I am the third child in my family. I have one brother and one sister." After giving additional facts about his family and where he lives, Ice T. moves on to his next section, "THE FRESH SIDE," again copying the framing of the NWA record. This second side takes a new familiar tone and serves as a response to Titch's letter from England:

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[1] I would like to thank Ruth Forman for helping with the interpretation of the raps and the framing in Ice T.'s writing.

> Well, that's all I can say about my family so now I'm going to tell about me. Hi, all you def homeboys in England this is ICE T and I'm going to tell you all about me. I am fourteen years old. I like to listion to rap music and play football. I am not an all-star but I think I'm pretty good for a freshmen free safety. I hope to get a letter from Antoinette because she is freaky. My friend Eric and all the boys in the class really like Antoinette but someone should tell her that freak means a whole different meaning in America than it does in England. It does not mean what you think it means—out here it means that you like to have sex a lot. I hope you are not mad at me for telling you this.

Ice T. concludes with "THE LAST SIDE" which contains only the following line: "I have told all I can tell about me and what I like to do so this is so long." He closes with a letter form, "Your friend, Ice T."

Easy E. opens by writing about himself and then about his friend Ice T.:

> One of my best friend's name is Ice T. and he is real cool or he thinks he is real cool anyway. We have three classes together so we have a lot of fun and spend a lot of time together. Sometimes he acts like a real big baby. I mean he plays like a little kid, but like I said before he's cool or at least he thinks he is.

Like Ice T., he then uses parts of his autobiography to respond to the letters that came from Titch, Louise, and Marisa:

> Ice T. and all the other boys in my English class like Titch and her cousin Louise because Titch said she and Louise dress like freaks. I am not going to say that I don't like you two young ladies because I know I do a little bit, but I think I like Marisa a little bit more because of what whe wrote in her letter. You see I like a young lady who's not scared to say what she wants to.
>
> Our whole class is going to send picture of ourselves and our families and I hope your class will do the same especialy Titch, Louise, and Marisa because all the boys in our class want to see how you three young ladies look and so do I, so please send pictures.

With the following transition, Easy E. returns to the topic of his autobiography, himself:

> Now that I am through with telling you how much everyone in the United States likes everyone in England, I am going to tell you a little bit more about myself.

Geya begins with the formulaic name and age but then writes more personally about her elementary school life and her relationship with her little brother, Shawnell:

> When I was about five years to twelve years old I used to go to an elementary school called Cortez and Cortez was close to my house so I didn't have to walk so far. When I was eleven to twelve I kind of kept in a little trouble because people tried to play with my emotions. I wouldn't talk to anyone, I loved to be alone. When it was time for me to leave Cortez and go to junior high they were planning on tearing it down. My brother Shawnell went to the same school that I went to and if it wasn't for the people who were going to tear it down then my brother would have never gotten hit by a car but now he doesn't have to worry about that anymore because before I let my brother or my mother get hurt I would take it for them. Now Shawnell goes to an elementary called Coronado and it is a good school I guess, but he is just kind of bad because he lets most of his friends get him into trouble. When my mother finds out he comes to me and I ask my mother to give him one more chance. Then she starts to think about it and then says. "Okay, but. . . ." My brother is always frightened by the "but." Then she says, "You are to stay in your

> room until I say you can come out," and my brother says, "As long as I don't get a spanking."

About El Cerrito she writes:

> . . . so far it is o.k. but I don't like some of the people that go here. I like all of my teachers except for my art teacher because she thinks that the beginners are supposed to be perfect. What she don't know is that there is not one person on this living earth that is perfect. Some people could be born with talent but can't no one on the planet earth be perfect but one MAN and his name is JESUS CHRIST.

She includes a paragraph about two of her friends who are sisters. After explaining that they look similar, she narrates how their differences lead them into arguments:

> Whenever Landa says something dumb Lonnie always says that she is so stupid and she thinks that she knows everything but she does not and she will never know nothing. When Landa starts to say something Lonnie just says shut up. Then they start to argue and Landa says, "You better shut up with your Garfield eyes." Then Lonnie says, "You shut up with you broken stick nose.

Geya concludes with a paragraph about her yearning to visit England:

> I am so anxious to go to England. Ever since I was small I couldn't wait to go out there. I would like to visit the schools & the stores. I also would love to see the sights because in England I heard that they have so many beautiful sights. When I get bigger I am planning to go there.

In their interviews Joan's students describe how they went about this writing. Easy E. describes how and why the students create their fancy covers and why he chooses his title, "East Meets West":

> Me and a couple of my friends uh went to this computer class, and they were making all these kind of little posters, put on the front and, you know, try to make it interesting, so they wow, you know, I like this one. Well I just you know . . . put mine together. I made some little funny letters and um I just, you know, East—East Meets West, sort of like. I got that like from uh Rocky IV movie, and how they were uh putting so much publicity into that, I just wrote that. (Interview, March 21, 1988)

Besides making covers in computer class, Joan's students write their text on the computers in her classroom. Joan writes in her journal that she helps the students as they write at the computers and that she enjoys the one-to-one interaction that the writing time at the computers allows.

The computers also offer the students an opportunity to collaborate if they want to. Easy E. describes how they help each other:

> She [Joan Cone] wanted uh it [the autobiography] to be perfect I guess. And so everybody was okay okay, I'll change this and, you know, so it it was, I mean everybody helped each other out and stuff. And so then we got on the computers and, you know, we were thinking about, oh I think I should change this, and, you know, we were asking each other for help, and everybody was helping each other. And so . . . I think I stopped and I helped um somebody out, and then I finished up mine, the next couple of days, or something like that. But . . . we were just having fun. . . . I think I can speak for everybody when I say um most of—most of the kids in the class, we never did nothing like that. It just, we just

> got into it, and it was exciting, and we wanted to keep it going, keep going. (Interview, March 21, 1988)

Cool J. confirms this collaborative spirit:

> In my class, Run helped me. You know me and him we'd-we would always work next to each other cause we both sports fans, so we talk about the hoop game or—and you know I'd ask him—you know we'd—we'd just helped each other out. I'd ask him how you spell this and, you know, how should I put this, and it went the same for him. We helped each other a lot. (Interview, March 10, 1988)

By contrast, Rose, when asked if she worked with anyone at the computer, replies, "No. Um I do better by myself" (Interview, March 2, 1988). Geya, too, in keeping with her caution about a peer audience, describes her difficulties composing publicly at the computer:

> Every time I get ready to write, or to type or something, everybody would try to come over my shoulder and look, and I don't like that. . . . They just come and watch and try to peek at my stuff. Say "Don't look, get away!" And I'll be hiding with my hands. They just trying to steal my stuff. . . . They nosy. They want to know what I do. Cause I'm a loner and, you know, I like to, I like being by myself. And they just want to know what my business is, "Yeah that's my business, get away!" (Interview, March 21, 1988)

In the same interview, when she is asked, "Is there anybody . . . that you, you let share it with?" Geya replies quickly, "Ms. Cone."

As Easy E., Ice T., and Cool J. compose their autobiographies, they discuss their concern for their British audience. Easy E. thinks about what to "tell them" so they can "get to know me a little bit better":

> I said uh what should I tell them about, and then I was kinda like um I'll start off I was born in uh 1973 in Brookside Hospital, and just telling them, you know, about, you know, when I was little, and how it was in elementary, and how different it, you know, is now in high school. You know, how tall I am and just little things, I mean to just, so they can get to know me a little bit better, from um the letter, and then, you know, I told them in another letter, I told them about, you know, a couple of my friends and how we hang out every day and stuff like that. (Interview, March 21, 1988)

Similarly, Ice T. explains, "I erased about a million words that I didn't like"; when asked why, he replies, "Cause you—I had to make sure that it sounded right to them, it was interesting not boring." When asked how he makes his writing interesting, he replies, "You just have to have a imagination. . . . You have to think in your head just what is interesting to you, it might be interesting to them" (Interview, March 21, 1988).

Predictably, in Geya's and Rose's talk they are less oriented toward the needs of the British audience. When Geya is asked why she includes a particular piece of information, she replies, "I thought it would be interesting to write about, some some humor in there. It was the truth I mean you know it was the truth" (Interview, March 21, 1988). She only mentions the British students after she is asked directly if anything in their letters gives her thoughts about what would interest them. Nevertheless, in their prose the two girls consider their foreign audience, but their orientation is to the group, not to particular individuals. For example, Rose begins her piece like a letter to the class, and Geya concludes with her desire to visit England.

Joan finds that at this early point in the year her students, especially Rose, have a difficult time separating the autobiography form from the letter form; they do not know whether they are writing to individual Burlington Danes students or to a whole-class audience. According to Joan's journal, this confusion is caused in part by Julie, a student aide who helped in class twice a week, because Julie thought the exchange was for letter writing. Consequently, the students whom Julie assists with their autobiographies write with the idea of individual Burlington Danes students as their audience, and the students whom Joan helps write with a wider audience in mind.

The section from Ice T.'s autobiography responding to Titch's letter shows the tension he feels between the personal and the group audience. Ice T. here slides from the topic of sports for the whole class to his words to Titch as his sole reader. Ironically, when Ice T. first begins to orient himself to Titch, he continues to address the group and excludes Titch as an outsider: "someone should tell her." Then he uses an indefinite "you" that could refer to the group or Titch, "It does not mean what you think it means." Finally, Ice T. addresses Titch with a "you" that could only be for Titch herself, "I hope you are not mad at me."

The British autobiographies arrive soon after Joan's students put theirs in the mail. Although a greater percentage of Joan's class sends work, what arrives from England is longer and more substantive (see Table 6.1). Eight British autobiographies even include headings to mark parts of the text. Swivel calls her six headings chapters. The British lengths vary from 1½ pages to Garney's 12 pages or 2,677 words, more than twice as long as the longest autobiography from Joan's class, Cool J.'s at 1,171 words. Noteworthy is the fact that while most of Joan's students' autobiographies contain covers and photographs, only half of the British set includes these extras.

Garney's autobiography illustrates the longest of the British pieces. Throughout her narrative, which consists of five sections (Myself, my family, and where I live; My Religion; My School life; My Travels; and My life, past and present), Garney mixes the facts with her commentary on them. For example, in her first section, after describing where she lives, giving a physical description of herself, and telling about her brothers, she tells about her parents:

> Both my Parents were born in Narobi, Kenya, in Africa, but they were bought up in Gujarat in India, in a village called Madapur. Which you may not have heard of!
> Then when my mum was about 13 years old she moved to Lancashire, and my dad moved to London when he was about 15 years old, but I'm not sure if they were both exactly that age.

After explaining about her elementary school, she concludes her first two-page section with some information about how she spends her leisure time:

> During the summer Holidays there is a playscheme, which I used to go to, but I'm too old to go now, because its only from ages 5-14. At the playscheme, some adult volenteers take the kids on trips to Parks, Sea-side, Fairs, Zoo's etc.
>
> During the weekends I'm usually out and about, going from one place to another. I am a great American soap fan. I love watching Dallas, Dynasty and the Colbys. At the moment none of them come on the T.V., because they're all finished for the time being. But they'll be back soon. My favourite T.V. show is 'The Cosby Show' but it does'nt come on the T.V. at the moment.
>
> I've got a favourite English soap, its called 'Eastenders' its brilliant!

She describes a special day for brothers. Then she moves on to describe Diwali, and a Hindu wedding, including her thoughts on arranged marriages:

> Hindu's also celebrate Diwali. Diwali is like an Indian Christmas. During Diwali fireworks are let off. Special food is made, (indian sweets) presents are given and recieved, and people go to the temple to prayer. Diwali celebrates the birth of an Indian God called Rama. Hindu's celebrate Diwali just like Christians celebrate Christmas.
>
> During a Hindu wedding, lots of unusual things are done, between the couple getting married and the priest. A Hindu wedding is not necessarily held in a Temple it can be held anywhere, as long as there's enough room for the guests. The weddings I've been to are mostly held in a school hall. A the end of the wedding, the Bride and Bridegroom are driven off, to the Grooms house. Before they are driven off the Bride cries, and says godbye to her family, by embracing them, before she goes. All the weddings I've been to I've seen the bride cry. I think its a custom, but I could be wrong, because I would be sad to leave my family too! I was a Bride in my Uncles wedding.
>
> My mum had an arranged Marriage, which I think is Absolutely pathetic. I repeat Pathetic. Because my mum had'nt met my dad. Although when she did meet him, my dad fancied her, but I don't think my mum did, but my mums dad thought my dad was good enough to marry my mum, so my mum could'nt argue. That's life. Sometimes she jokes with me saying that she wished she could have married another man. But I don't know about that one. After all he is my dad!
>
> Anyway enough about the Wedding business, you're probably bored already.

Later in the year, Garney will write again about Diwali and arranged marriages.

Reception of the British Writing. When the British autobiographies arrive, the news of the package from abroad is received with great enthusiasm. However, the British writing proves to be difficult for Joan's students to read; her class seems particularly bothered by the British handwriting. To help her students overcome their difficulty with reading, Joan organizes time for each autobiography to be read aloud and discussed by the group. As they talk about the British work, her students discuss the qualities which make the British autobiographies interesting and make them as readers feel that they actually know the British writers. Joan writes in her journal:

> I noticed that as I went along it was easy to point out things about effective writing to the kids. The British kids who write the most interesting autobiographies were those who showed not told and who gave enough background information to make themselves clear. Those whose stories were mere lists of places and events received the poorest ratings by my students. We talked a lot about the students that we liked best from what they wrote and the students we felt we knew best (usually one and the same) and we discussed why we had those feelings. The kids clearly got the point that they need to "jump off the page" in order to engage their reader.

Most helpful to Joan's students is Garney's writing. Also, as a Hindu, Garney's experiences are particularly interesting to Joan's mostly African American and Christian audience. Her description of her religious practices are particularly exotic, something Ice T. especially notes.

Conclusions. Without any formal response letters, Joan's students are making deep social connections. If the introductory letters are key in beginning the social relationship between Sue's and Joan's classes, the autobiographies seal it for many students in the class. Joan's students' growing social ties to their audience in England help Joan engage her students with her academic agenda. Together, she and her students discover, as they read the British autobiographies, how to appeal to a distant peer audience. Joan helps her students anticipate and meet the needs of the British students, encouraging their attempts through their writing to gain entry into the social lives of the British class, while at the same time working with them to take the academic steps necessary to write to a general rather than an individual audience. They move the "show not tell" strategy beyond a simple technique as they use it to help them "jump off the page" so that they can reach their new readers.

Holiday Papers

Joan suggests that this exchange focus on "how students celebrate specific national or religious holidays," with a due date at the second term's end, January 15 (Letter, September 5, 1987). She reintroduces this idea in her October letter, this time spelling out her rationale for this assignment as one that would integrate personal experience with "a chance to do some research." Joan's idea is that the topic of holidays could prove particularly intriguing for an exchange project involving "different cultures." In her December letter, Sue agrees to the activity, stating that she "particularly like[s] the idea of writing about national, religious, and family holidays." Joan's students start the holiday pieces in late January and finish them in early February. The parallel British pieces, although begun in December, are also sent in February (see Figure 6.3).

The Writing. In Joan's class the students choose which holiday they want to write about. At first many select Christmas, but during class discussion Joan convinces them to consider other holidays. In the end, besides Christmas they write about Easter, Halloween, New Year's Eve, St. Patrick's Day, Valentine's Day, Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday, and personal birthdays. The students encourage each other to include lots of details so that the English students will understand American holidays better and enjoy reading their papers. In spite of Joan's prodding, her students' holiday papers are generally brief. Most seem to function mostly as attempts to connect with their English friends, with the topic of the holiday getting in the way more than helping.

As Table 6.2 shows, with the exception of Cool J., the focal students write pieces in the 200 word range. Geya's piece about her birthday is particularly weak compared to her earlier writing. Omitting the revealing personal touches, she completes one long paragraph which begins, "I am going to tell you how I celebrate my birthay because I don't know how birthdays are traditionally celebrated. Most people don't celebrate their birthdays but as you can see, I'm not one of those persons." She then explains that she "collect[s] a lot of money from friends and realitives and when I come home I have a lot of money and I share it with my mother and my brother." After going shopping for food and clothes, she goes out for dinner with her mother and brother. Finally, there is a party during which she says that her "mother puts on a couple of fast records that she can't stand at all. My mother doesn't like any kind of rapping." And these words conclude Geya's writing about her birthday.

By contrast, Easy E. and Ice T. clearly work hard to connect to the British class. Easy E. opens his extremely informal and frivolous piece about New Year's Eve with, "Hello all you great girls and guys down in England. This is Easy E. and I'm going to tell you about one of the most rockingest holidays of the year, and that my friends is New Years." Similarly, Ice T. opens his St. Patrick's Day piece:

> ICE TO FOR THE MONEY
>
> Hi all you def people in England. This is ICE T and I'm going to tell you about one of my favorite holidays of the year.

Interestingly, both boys conclude with encyclopedia-like information about their holiday. Contrast Ice T.'s last paragraphs with his opening:

> The feast of St.Patrick, bishop and confessor, is celebrated on March 17 by Roman Catholics and some Episcopalians.
>
> St.Patrick is called the apostle of Ireland and is that country's patron saint.
>
> We celebrate St.Patrick's day because of the good thing he did for Ireland.

Opening with a more formal but consistent tone, Rose chooses Valentine's Day. Her opening contrasts strikes an intermediate place between Ice T.'s and Easy E.'s openings and conclusions:

> Do you know what's on February 14? It's Valentine's Day! Well let me tell you a little about it. Valentine's Day is where people give flowers, candy, cards, and other things like gifts to close freind as well as to their boyfriends or girlfriends telling them that you care and think about them. This is the best time for a shy guy to tell that "someone special" that she has an admirer.

Cool J., however, writes a moving and serious piece about Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday. In an interview, Cool J. expresses his strong motivation for writing. Frustrated with some of his fellow students' attitudes about their heritage, he complains, "Most of the blacks in the class and in that school, you know, they just walk around like it ain't no big trip, you know." Cool J. stresses how important it is to recognize those who come before us and the contributions that they give to our present society. He concludes with the following heartfelt words:

> I celebrate Dr. King's birthday by just thinking about what he did for me. Dr. King didn't want to be remembered for all the awards he won and his education, but for what he did for his people. Times aren't as bad as they used to be, but in some parts of Southern America blacks are still treated like # * @ %. Last year in Georgia blacks got together to march (led by Reverend Jesse Jackson) in an all-white county in honor of Dr. King. The whites didn't want the blacks to march. The whites threw rocks and sang "go home nigger's." But blacks kept on keeping on.
>
> Dr. King won a lot of awards. One of the most famous was the Nobel Peace Prize. Dr. King touched a lot of people's lives. Because of Dr. King Reverend Jesse Jackson is running for the democratic spot for the up coming presidential election. Rev. Jesse Jackson isn't the first black person to run but, the first to have a national campaign. In Arizona which is a state in the U.S. their govenor didn't want to honor Dr. King's birthday. I'm kind of upset that it took from 1968 to 1983 to honor Dr. King's birthday.
>
> I hope you like what I wrote to you. And I would like to hear from a black student and hear what he or she knows or has to say.

Cool J. explains why he wanted to send this essay and why he thinks it is more important than his own autobiography:

> I'm important in my own little way and, you know, it may not seem to the world, but I am somebody. But he is somebody, you know. So I think, you know, little Cool J., you know, they can wait to know about Cool J. Maybe I might do something one day to be famous. But he's already famous and, cause it is a different country, maybe they should know about him. (Interview, March 10, 1988)

The holiday papers from England focus on a range of holidays, some familiar to Joan's students (one on Valentines' Day, two on New Year's Eve, one on May Day, and five on Christmas); and others less familiar like one on Boxing Day, one on Shrove Tuesday, two on Diwali, one on Carnival, and one on other Muslim holidays. The writing from England is again on average longer than those written in Joan's class. The lengths are generally in the 300 to 500 word range but vary from two short paragraphs in one piece on Christmas to Garney's 642 words on Diwali in three sections: "DIWALI IN GENERAL," "POEM ABOUT DIWALI," and "MY

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE DURING DIWALI." Garney also includes what she calls two "typical Diwali cards" and what Ice T. remembers as "a couple of postcards from the day, it was a Indian holiday" (Interview, June 7, 1988).

Garney's piece, which is mentioned as memorable by all the focal students in Joan's class, represents the most substantial of the British holiday papers just as Cool J.'s represents the most substantial from the United States. In her opening section Garney explains:

> Diwali celebrates the birth of the Hindu God Rama. Just like Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus. The date for Christmas day is December the 25th, of course, but for Diwali there is no particular day, it is usually at the end of October or the beginning of November.

After remarking that people have "a good time" during Diwali, she further explains:

> People go to the temple (Church) to pray and thank God for everything. At the temple the people meet their friends and relations, and give money to people they want to give it to, as a present. Fireworks are let off at the temple as a display for everyone to see, and also let off at home. During the day people go to their friends and relations houses. They also make special Indian sweets, and delicious spicy foods. Some people invite each other to eat over at their house. People give out presents to each other. Diwali is very near enough the same as Christmas, a very happy and festive time.

Garney's poem contains four stanzas of four lines each, with rhymes either in an aabb pattern or an abab pattern, except for the last stanza with an abcc pattern. The first stanza is typical and sets the tone for the rest:

> Diwali comes but once a year,
> it brings with it joy and cheer,
> People everywhere with merry faces,
> Going for fun to different places.

Most revealing are Garney's reflections about her own experiences during Diwali. After explaining that her relatives bring presents and stay for tea and that she receives telephone greetings of "'SALMUBARAK', which means Happy Diwali, and a Happy New Year," she writes about going to the temple:

> All the religious people, say religious Hindu words as they pray, but I just move my mouth about, to look as if I'm praying, but really, I'm not.
>
> I'm not a religious person at all, I don't understand a thing that goes on in my religion, not that I really want to anyway. I pretend that I know everything, just to keep everybody happy.

Garney then describes the family dinner of "rice, chapati's, daal soup, salad and Indian sweets" and explains that she talks to her cousins, "mum talks to her sister and her brother's wife, while my dad is having an old booze up with both my uncles. (Booze up means to have alcoholic drinks)." She ends in letter form:

> Hope to hear from you soon.
> Love
> Garney

The other two papers mentioned as memorable by Joan's students are Primitive's and Louise's. Primitive writes a 261 word, rather frivolous piece about Boxing Day. Not in letter form, he begins, "I chose BOXING DAY for my national holiday because it's my sister Pele's birthday." He continues at first seriously with brief facts about Boxing day:

> Boxing day is Saint Stephen's day.
> Boxing is called by that name because in victorian times
> Christmas started to be celebrated as a present giving time.
> The rich families gave their friends presents on Christmas day and gave their servants boxes full of sweets, goodies etc. . . . on the next day.

The next section, about his sister's birthday, describes in an adolescent male voice his sisters' drunken Christmas celebrations:

> They come downstairs with their eyes all RED RED RED from drinking CRUCIAL BREW, THUNDERBIRDS, PEACH CANEI and TENNANTS.
> Their breath smells of sewage and when they talk bits of 7-ELEVEN'S BIG 'UN fly from their mouth.

He then describes the birthday festivities and claims that his mother leaves the food out until morning, and so he sets his alarm for 2 a.m. when he sneaks downstairs to eat the leftovers. He concludes, "I go to bed with all bits of choclate at the corner of my mouth and drink all over my BOXER shorts and my BHS thermal top."

Like Garney, Louise uses letter form as she describes Carnival in 300 words:

> Hi there this is Louise
> Carnival is a happytime, every August around summer there is a carnival it is supposed to be a celebration of when slavery was abolished. At carnival Ladbroke Grove is filled up with people all the streets are filled up with stalls, sounds, floats, costumes, there's loads of music reggae, soca, soul, Hip Hop and everybody is dancing Westbourne Park, Golborne rd are all filled up, but carnival Sunday is also a time of trouble Sunday night (carnival goes on for two days and two nights) all the boys use carnival as a time to have all their fights and carnival gone last year there was a riot between the Radies (police) and the Boys and men there were bad fights last year and people were killed but enough of that now.

Louise concludes with one more paragraph, similar in length, about the food, dancing, and drugs. Then she adds a few sentences about what she and her friends do: "We drink and smoke and get drunk and all of me and my friends are happy and we meet new people and dance with everybody. I think carnival is the bst time of the year." Louise closes her "letter":

> See you later
> from Louise
>
> your safe !!!

Reception of U.S. Writing in Great Britain. The British research team reports that Cool J.'s essay has his intended impact on the students in Sue's class. Alex McLeod is in the classroom the day the U.K. students first see the holiday papers. They sit in groups of three or four reading and Sue invites each student to choose one to read aloud to the class. McLeod reports that Tootsie, after reading Cool J.'s piece, announces to the class that she is going to read this one aloud and that she is going to write to Cool J. about it. Tootsie's need to respond to Cool J. is so urgent that, encouraged by Sue, she writes on the back of a letter Sue is preparing to send to Joan:

> To Cool J., I'm just writing a short message to say that I thought your essay on the national holiday of Martin Luther King was very interesting and that I agreed with your point that it took them from 1968 up to 1983 before they decided to honour the many great things that he did. Not only for black Americans but for people all over the world.

In his first interview, Cool J. proudly volunteers the following information: "I received a note from Tootsie. She says she liked it and appreciated how I wrote it, and she agreed with my point that it took from 1968 to 1983 just to honor his birthday" (Interview, March 10, 1988).

Cool J.'s friend, Easy E., informs the U.S. researchers that the British kids especially liked Cool J.'s piece because "he wrote about Martin Luther King and, you know, they don't have that holiday, so they were interested in that" (Interview, June 10, 1988). In her February letter, Sue reports an enthusiastic response of British students to Joan's class's holiday essays, crediting the exchange audience—and by implication its cross-cultural aspect—with dramatically heightening motivation for writing in her class. Joan's group succeeds in engaging its audience.

Reception of British Writing. When the holiday papers arrive from England, Ice T. recalls that "Miss Cone lined, lined us up in like a circle, and she ga- passed one out to everybody. We all read it. We read it out loud." Then when asked "Generally what did people think about them?" Ice T. replies, "They say god, they have days like that?" When asked, "Which holidays were the most surprising?" he replies:

> Boxer's Day. Everybody thought it was a like a day that boxers went out and fought or something. And there was um one day, there was this other holiday, um forgot who wrote it, but she sent us a couple of postcards from the day. It was a Indian holiday. . . . Everybody enjoyed that one. (Interview, June 7, 1988)

At the end of the year, when asked if any of the British writing stands out in her mind, Geya replies:

> Their holidays. They have different kinds, I mean you know, it's kind of like similar, but there was one Boxer Day. It's like a Christmas Day, you know, they get presents, I think that's what they were saying. I thought you know something, they had around two or three that was different from ours. And it was interesting to read it. (Interview, June 7. 1988)

In fact, later in the year when Geya sends a letter to Sarah, Garney, and Andrew, she includes a response to the holiday papers:

> When we had first got your Holiday letters Man they were very interesting because you all put so many details in there, that made it even more interesting. When I first seen you're letters, I thought that they were all the same Holidays as ours out here, but boy was I wrong. I found all different kind of Holidays that I never would have thought of.

Conclusions. For this exchange in both classes there is a range of levels of participation and quality of writing—from Cool J.'s to the others in Joan's class and from Garney's to Primitive's in Sue's. Also in both classes the writing for this exchange is shorter than for the autobiographies. The British writing still remains, on average, longer than the writing of Joan's students. Nevertheless, through this holiday exchange, students in both countries deepen their understanding of one anothers' cultures and show clearly their growing knowledge about how to appeal to their foreign audience. They are reflecting on their world and expanding their sense of what is possible.

Shakespeare Papers: Romeo and Juliet

The Shakespeare papers are the last coordinated exchange for the year. Joan first suggests this exchange in her September letter when she proposes that the fourth exchange consist of an "imaginative" piece of writing in response to one of five books: *Romeo and Juliet*, *Animal Farm*, *Fahrenheit 451*, *Julie of the Wolves*, or *Anne of Green Gables*. In an interview with the researchers Joan explains why she gives the rash deed assignment:

> I have this thing about asking kids to write like a personal narrative or an essay connected to the theme of every piece of literature, so they really internalize it. There's always some kind of connection so that they really get into, you know, the main character's plight or the writer's theory. (Interview, April 27, 1988)

In her December letter Sue picks up on Joan's *Romeo and Juliet* suggestion, proposing "that the two classes might undertake some work on *Romeo and Juliet*," remarking that it is included in a "unit" of her curriculum also involving *Macbeth* and *The Tempest*. When Joan writes to Sue in February, she describes her class's plans for writing about *Romeo and Juliet*:

> We are going to begin two writing assignments, one my idea and one theirs [the students']. So far during our study of the play we have had our students write two personal narratives for homework assignments, one about a time they did something rash and another about a time their mother or father did something rash (if their parents refuse to tell them a story, the kids are writing another one about themselves). When we finish reading the play, they will choose to revise and rewrite the personal narrative they think you will enjoy most and they will type it on the computer. The next thing they will do came as an idea from Elaine. She suggested—and the other kids agreed—that they rewrite some scenes and act them out for you on video.

Unfortunately, because of the incompatibility of British and American video equipment, Elaine's idea is abandoned. Some of the students do rewrite various scenes using modern language and street talk, and Geya's is sent to England.

In her February letter, Sue announces that she will send her class's *Romeo and Juliet* papers shortly, though she does not discuss their form or content. Although one is dated as early as February 4 while others are dated in March and April or are undated, the British papers are not sent until late May, arriving in early June when school in the U.S. is about over. They come as a packet, with students often writing several pieces each.

The Writing. The central pieces for this exchange, the students' personal narratives about their own and/or a parent's rash deed, are not written exactly as Joan had planned. Instead of selecting one to send and rewriting it, the students send whatever writing they produce: four do not participate; of the rest, some send both a piece about themselves and their parents, some send a piece about themselves only, and some send a piece about their parents only.

When students have difficulty remembering a rash deed of their own, Joan suggests they make one up. On March 2, 1988, during a class visit by the research team, Easy E. and several other male students go out of their way to put on record for the research team that they either exaggerated or completely fabricated their rash deed papers—in some instances because they could not think of a story to tell and in others because they simply wanted to impress the British kids.

In her April interview Joan expresses her worries that most of her students do not understand the connection between their own or their parents' rash deeds, be they real or fictionalized, and the impetuosity of Romeo and Juliet. A look at the students' writing reveals that most make no reference to the play. They do write about rash deeds that caused them or their parents to get into trouble either with parents or the police, and most suggest a lesson or moral for the reader.

Geya is finally becoming comfortable with the British students and begins to write to them with the kind of trust she placed earlier only in Joan. Besides a piece about a rash deed of her mother's, she tells about a truly rash deed of her own, cutting school when she was 12 to go off with a 21-year-old man. Apparently entirely truthful, she writes vividly and personally:

> When I was in the 7th grade I was in love, at least that is what I thought anyway. I called myself madly in love with this guy and he was 21 years old then. His name was Roberto but I don't want to tell you his last name. Anyway one day I went to the bus stop and I was with a girl named Vanessa. After a while her uncle came and gave her a ride and they asked me if I wanted a ride. but I said no thanks. After another while Roberto came over to me and asked if he could take me to school. I said yes. So we started to talk inside of the car as we were cruising down the street. We finally got to my school Portola Junior High School. I told him to take me in the parking lot but he took me across the street and he told me that I could at least take one day out with him. I thought about it and it was kind of hard for me to agree but I finally gave in.
>
> He took me to a place that I had never seen before so that means I cut school. He took me to a park and we watched the cars and people pass by. He really wanted to so something that I definitely didn't want to and so he kind of got mad. I started to leave. I turned around and there were his keys so I decided to take them. While he was searching for me I was in the car listening to his music. When he spotted me I was kind of lying down in his car. When he got inside the car it was an hour later he was very mad. He was so mad but he didn't hit me and then I started to love him even more. Then we went to the store and we ate. After we had finished eating he took me to a place that looked like a place that you and your loved one cut school and go to do whatever it is that they do, but we didn't do anything. When we got there I tried to make him run off a cliff. I tried to kill us because I felt bad. He stopped the car in time so I got mad and got out of the car.
>
> The next day my mother got a telephone call from my counselor telling her that I didn't come to school and when I got home everyone got the idea that he had done something to me that shouldn't have been done but I am telling the truth. HE DID NOT DO ANYTHING. Boy when I got home I got the whipping of my life. I learned a lesson. Right today I know not to ever cut and go with someone that I call myself in love with.

Interestingly, Geya reveals in an interview that she would be uncomfortable sharing this writing with the students in her class but not with the distant British audience. She explains that at first she does not want to do this assignment and then explains why she selects this particular rash deed:

> In a way I didn't want to do it, because I thought everybody [in the class] was gonna read it, and she [Joan] wanted us to read it out loud. Then I asked her about it, and she said no, you know, it's gonna be, the class not gonna read it. And so I had to think about a couple of things I did. And that was just the one thing I I learned a lesson from.
>
> . . . .
>
> It just sticks in my mind. Every time I think about it, I try to wipe it out, it just won't leave. And the bad thing about it, he lived right down the street from my house. My mother don't like him. (Interview, April 27, 1988)

Geya says that she wants to share her experience with the students in England because she "hope[s] they just learn from this." She recalls in her June interview, "I didn't feel right telling them that cause it was personal, but I wrote it." When asked why she decides to write this experience down, she again reiterates, "It could teach a person a lesson." Geya is satisfied with the way she wrote this piece because she thinks it is "has the details" and is graphic. She explains what makes this and other pieces of writing vivid for her:

> When you read it you can really feel what's happening. . . . Like if I read a book or something, you can actually picture yourself in the book. Sometimes I read a book, and I thought I seen a movie, but it was in a book. (Interview, April 27, 1988)

Easy E., although comfortable with the British audience from the start, also begins to blossom at this point in the year. He is the only student to link his ideas about himself explicitly to *Romeo and Juliet*:

> I remember once my best friend and I snuck out of our houses late at night and went swimming. We knew we were going to get in trouble but we didn't care. I guess we acted without thinking just like some of the actors did in the play Romeo and Juliet.

Although Easy E. fabricates his own rash deed because he could not think of anything to write, he writes about one of his father's real rash deeds. He is happiest with the piece about his father who is endangered by the antics of his older brothers. At the climax, Easy E. writes the part he likes best—"about um him being stuck up I mean stuck out in the middle":

> When my Fathers two brothers and their friends saw my father they made him get on the swing and swing to the other side of the cliff, once my father got to the other side he was sapose to jump off the swing,but when he got to the other side he was to scared to jump so he was stuck out in the middle of the air on a swing. My fathers brothers and their friends found a pole and pulled him to the side of cliff, but when they pulled him to the side the tier bounced off the side of the cliff and my father fell off the swing and went sliding down the side of cliff.

When asked why he likes this part best, he replies:

> It seems like most people, you know, if you're playing follow the leader, you know, and there's um like six people, the last one always seems to be the one that has some trouble, or something like that. Always gets stuck somewhere. And then everybody'd be like oh we got a wait, we gotta try to get him over here, you know, and just, you know, I just liked that because, you know, it seems like something always, like something always would happen, you know, like that, you know. Every time, you know, you do something like that, you'd be thinking that, you know, everybody, you know, you're not going to have no trouble with this. And then someone always gets stuck or, you know, can't do it, and then you have to just wait and try to figure out a way to go back and bring him with you, or something like that. I just, you know, I like that part. (Interview, April 28, 1988)

Easy E. explains how he would tailor this piece if it were only for his friends in the United States:

> Like if I was talking to um Ice T. or Rex or, you know, just one of my friends I be with everyday and just, you know, writing a letter to them, you know, and, you know, we be together everyday. So I would say, man wasn't that crazy what my father did, you know, and have it, you know, where they, you know, man that was, man I would never do that, you know, and have them so, you know, they would probably laugh and say, you know, just, you know, something really different because, you know, I be with them all the time. This is just some of like a way, you know, you can make them laugh, so you can just write something. (Interview, April 28, 1988)

Ice T. writes about himself and his mother; his goal is to make his writing "interesting": "Not just put anything down to make it kind of boring but to make it interesting. Something somebody might want to hear" (Interview, April 27, 1988). For his own rash deed, he explains how he and some friends swam in the deep part of the swimming pool without passing the swimming test required before being allowed to swim there. He concludes with the following paragraph:

> My friends and I didn't have any fun because we wanted to swim in the deep part and dive. But we all couldn't pass the swimming test. So my friends and I decided to wait till the pool started closing and swim over to the diving board. When the pool started closing all of us swam over to the diving board and swam in the deep part. We knew that we would get kicked out but we didn't care. When the lifeguard saw us he didn't say anything. I thought he would make us leave but he just looked at us crazy. I knew we would get in trouble but I didn't care.

Ice T. says he wrote about this deed because he thought it was funny but he worries that his portrayal may not get across the humor: "It's like more realistic when you when it happened" (Interview, April 27, 1988). Ice T. even explains that he laughed while he wrote, remembering the lifeguards watching him and his friends break the rules:

> like when the lifeguard was looking at us all crazy then couple more lifeguards they just stood there looking at us, with this crazy looks and just whispering to each other.

Ice T. likes the part about how he broke the rules but didn't care because he thinks that event explains something about his personality: "When I say I knew we would get in trouble but I didn't care because that's the way I am." However, he quickly qualifies, "But I don't I don't get in trouble at school though. I just like when I was at the pool."

Ice T. explains that he wrote his rash deed piece chronologically, "I just went like scene by scene what happened, then I wrote it down." After he writes a draft and does some revisions, his teacher helps him. Since this writing is "on the computer" he says, "I just went back and forth and just changed it, things that were wrong." When asked about the kind of help he gets from his teacher, he explains that he receives help with sentence boundaries:

> She just said maybe you should splice yourself a little bit, or h— then put have the period or commas in the right place. She'd go back and say correct that right there.

In the end, Ice T. is not completely satisfied with this writing. He says he wishes he "would have wrote a little bit better than this." When asked how he would change this piece, he explains the events around passing the swimming test and then concludes that he would add these details:

> Ice T: I should have said I passed the swim test instead of my brother. It would have been a little bit more realistic.
>
> CR: D— did you pass it?
>
> Ice T: No. I don't well I didn't really take it. I didn't want to take it because you had to swim back and forth underwater, non-stop, for two back and forth from the pool, from one side of the pool underwater and you can't stop. Um I didn't want to hold my breath for that long. So first time I just, well a few times I snuck over there, and then they didn't really see me, and then I came back over, and then as soon as I got back over, they said they said um don't go back over there again.

> Then I pretended like I didn't know why. I said, "Why?" Said, "Cause you gotta take a swim test." Then every time the lifeguards would change, they would they see one lifeguard they would know that I was the one, but when they changed lifeguards I would sneak over there so the new, so the new lifeguard wouldn't know that it be me. I should have added on those details.

Ice T. is thinking specifically about making his writing better and providing more realistic detail for the kids in England. He continues, "Like kids in England, they kind of have an idea of what I'm like. I hope they do by now."

Ice T. selects the swimming pool incident over some other rash deeds because he does not want to project too rowdy a persona to the British students. About a section he deleted when he was revising, he explains:

> Like my like my brother, he once was in the pool and he pulled down this girl's shorts, and I didn't want to write that because I thought it was too bad. She started she started to scream. Yeah so I didn't want to write that. I thought it was too bad.

Ice T. has censored out some of the more outrageous and what he considers more interesting events because he is sending his work abroad. He reports that Ms. Cone has told the group not to write anything "too bad"; and he too is concerned with his self image. However, upon thinking about the issue Ice T. concludes that he has censored too much. "All the rest of the things I did were, I thought they were too bad, but now if I had another chance, I'd probably write them, write them out."

For his mother's rash deed, Ice T. explains how his mother let a friend who had no dental insurance use her dental insurance; Ice T.'s mother posed as the girl's mother. Ice T. explains his mother's feelings in his essay:

> My mom felt very nervous about the whole thing. It was very difficlut for her to try to carry out the scheme. So much so, that while her friend was in the dentist's chair, she called her by her real name.

He says that this story is a scam. He recounts the real event:

> She went she um took her friend to the dentist, and um .. she pretended like she was her older sister, and um she us- she used her own my my Mom used her own dental coverage, and um it didn't work and they they just kicked them both out. So when her mother, her friend's mother got home, um she pretended she pretended like um she fell or something, on her bicycle and told her well told her parents and they took her to the dentist. They got her tooth fixed. (Interview, June 7, 1988)

Cool J. writes about breaking a window with a rock while playing baseball. He and his friend "walked home like nothing happened." He then explains that a couple of weeks later the owner of the house came to his front door and asked his father if Cool J. had broken his window. Cool J. confesses:

> In about 5 minunts my father called me in the living room. He asked me if I broke the the man's window. I didn't know what to say. I told the man and my father the truth. I told them how it all happened. My father made me say I was sorry and my father paid for the cost of the repairs. I got this long talk and he made me pay him back for the window.

In his interview Cool J. admits that his story up to the point of the confession and then tells the real facts:

> Just about everything in this story is true. Everything up until the point where, let's see, everything up to the point where we broke the window and we put stuff in my backyard like nothing happened. To this day, the only people that know what happened is my cousin and myself. We never told nobody, and now some new people live in in the house, and so like, a couple of months had passed, and we went to play back there. And he said he the man said somebody had broke his window. And I had another friend with me, then it was my cousin, my friend and myself. My friend said well we didn't break your window. He never knew nothing about it. I said no you know we didn't break it. He said well it's a small hole. He said it looks like a rock had been through it, and I said, no, we don't throw rocks, because rocks are dangerous. You can put somebody's eye out, so I said a tennis ball probably couldn't have done it. So he said he had to have it fixed and it cost $75 for a small hole this big. Right because it was big glass, and you had to have the whole thing taken out, put it back in. So we play there now, and the new people there, they're they pretty, they said if a ball goes over there, go ask him and he'll get it for us. (Interview, April 28, 1988)

Cool J. explains that he invents the ending because of the demands of the writing task:

> The assignment was to do something that you did without thinking, and then got punished for, so I made you know, I put a little fiction, like any other author would do. Have facts and then stretch the truth to give it a ending. (Interview, April 28, 1988)

Like Ice T., Cool J. censors some of his ideas because his writing is being sent to England. Cool J. explains, "Like some things is personal that you did without thinking. I don't want people in England reading." Also, he thinks some of his ideas are inappropriate from his teachers' point of view:

> Miss Cone, she wouldn't really want us to send this type of stuff to England. . . . when you write to yourself, you can tell any detail. You don't have too much edit this, edit that, fix this up, and fix that up. (Interview, April 28, 1988)

For Cool J. it is possible both to write for yourself and for the British audience; he says he wrote his Martin Luther King Jr. essay for himself even though he sent it. But his rash deed paper was not for himself. Cool J. finds writing the rash deed easy since he just has to recount events and make up stories. He only spends one evening, about two hours, but since he is watching television at the same time, he only uses the time during the commercials. Cool J. knows he works inefficiently and ineffectively: "If I did my homework without the t.v., the radio like they recommend you should do, I would spend less time on it and do better." Nevertheless, Cool J. says he thinks the British kids will like this writing, but he cannot point to any specific part he thinks they will like. If he had an opportunity to revise, he would change the ending to make it more like the truth: "End it like question question question mark."

Cool J. concludes with a brief and uninspired paragraph about his father when he was 16 or 17 and went for a car ride with some friends. They got stopped by the police for driving in a car without the permission of the owner. In his interview Cool J. confesses that this part is entirely fiction and is included to fulfill what he understands the assignment to be and to get a grade:

> My father wasn't at home and my mother was gone too, so I just totally I guess lied on my father's. I don't like to use the phrase "lie," you know people might think I lie a lot, but it was an assignment. She never knew, so I got the grade. (Interview, April 28, 1988)

Rose writes two pieces, both about going to parties that involve drinking. The most elaborated is the first about going with her friend, Kendra, to a fourth of July "keg party" when her mother had told her she could not go. Kendra gets drunk and the incident ends with Rose getting in trouble:

> She [Kendra] got so drunk that she couldn't stand up. Every time someone would try to help her walk she would push them away and say that she could walk on her own. But every time they'ed let her go PLOP! she would go! Kip kept on telling me that I had to take a drink out of his mug, and it was huge. He calls it "THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH" it was pretty funny because he was so drunk his face just lit up! Well back to Kendra. I didn't know what to do! We had to be home in half and hour and she was blitzed! We got her home and my mother was standing in the door way just glaring at me and boy was she pissed! My mom had asked were we had gone because they couldn't find us. My mother smelled liquor on my breath so I got in even more trouble. That's when I stopped going out and getting drunk because it caused me more trouble than it was worth.

In her April 27 interview Rose says she writes about these events chronologically, "I just told it as it happened." She types directly onto the computer, first writing the basic events and then going back to do corrections and "put in the incidents." The whole thing takes Rose one day, with a little while the next day for corrections. Rose does not work with her peers, reporting "I work better by myself." Also, she says she receives no help from her teacher. She thinks her British readers will enjoy the part about her friend getting drunk. She then elaborates on an event she left out:

> I thought they might kind of get a kick out of about my friend being so drunk. There's only one detail that I left out, and that was on the way back, see the party was way down at El Cerrito this way, and in order to get back to my house, we took San Pablo. Since it was one o'clock, there were no cars, you know. And my friend was acting really crazy this whole time. And it was a two seater car and there was three of us in there. And so she kept like sticking her head out the window and screaming as we'd drive down the street with her hands out and she was waving. I thought she was going to fall out, so I kept trying to pull her back in. And I was holding on to her and she's all let me go and I said, "No, you're going to put your head out the window." So she just kind of sat there for a minute and then she's sitting there and then she goes, "I'm going to throw up," and I go, "Oh no." And I let her go, and she started hanging her head out the window screaming again. She did it so I'd let her go. That's the only thing that I left out.

Rose continues by explaining that she likes the part about her friend's mug called "the fountain of youth":

> It would be the thing where Ken calls his mug the fountain of youth. It's it's almost as big as this coffee pot. And it's just it's this huge mug, and he always takes it to parties. And he just fills it up with beer. And see the reason why my friend Kelly got so drunk was because she drank. She doesn't drink normally. She had like two or three, and that's why she got so drunk so quick. He kept saying "Here, have a sip," and then she walked off. You know he started talking with somebody else, and she walks off with it and drank it and came back, and then it was empty and he's all wait a minute.

All in all, Rose says that she does not mind sending this writing to England because "We've gotten some of their stories about things that they've done. They're just as bad as us."

All except one of Sue's students write about *Romeo and Juliet*, with two also writing about *Macbeth* and the other writing only about *Macbeth*. For this exchange, fewer than half of Sue's students send anything, with the pieces that arrive varied in form: plot summary; critical analysis; character analysis; personal reflections on how the play relates to everyday life; and imaginative news reports of the events in the play, one replete with interviews for a pretend television news show and another written in three newspaper-like columns. These British papers also range in length from one or two pages in what is labelled a "Controlled Assignment"[2] to Tootsie's 12$\frac{1}{2}$ pages in four separate pieces. The majority are between two and four pages (see Table 6.1).

Joshua writes two page-long pieces, one on *Macbeth* and the other, a controlled writing on *Romeo and Juliet* which consists of his impressions of a film version the class had watched. Joshua begins his controlled writing:

> When I first learned that we were going to be watching Romeo & Juliet, the balcony scene entered my mind instantly.
>
> When we started to watch the film the first scene was set in the town square. The film was filmed on location and the film was filmed in some very authentic places which did improve the quality.

He goes on to comment, with few specifics, on the acting, the costumes, the fight scene, the use of language. He concludes his single page:

> Whilst watching the film I was shocked to find that the balcony scence was nothing like I expected it be, infact I found it quite funny.
>
> The use of music in the film was rare and not very effective as it could have been.

To show the great range in these pieces, both in form and concept, we will also quote from "The Nurses Description of Scene Five" by Tootsie who writes an imaginative plot summary of one scene from the Nurse's point of view, replete with invented punctuation conventions, presumably the Nurse's since Tootsie does not use them in her other writing. Tootsie begins:

> Ohhhh! "I really do not know what to think. I was only telling my lady Juliet what I thought would be the most practical thing to do her being in such an unfortunate situation and all,". "What situation is that!?,". "You mean you don't know?,". "But of course you wouldn't, what with you being new and all,". "Well you've heard of the feud between the Capulets and the Montogues haven't you?"".

Then the Nurse retells the scene from her point of view, concluding with her feelings about the events:

> "The good Lord knows that I was only trying to do the right thing by my Lady Juliet,". But it just seems to have driven a wedge between us two thats near enough about to break my heart. "S'pose you can't blame the poor love for reacting in the way she did, Oh I do worry about her so, you know,".
>
> "There you have it, now, you know, whats going on,". "Well we can't stand here in the passageway gossiping all day, we've both got enough work to do and little enough time to do it in,". "So I'll be saying farewell for now.

Reception of the British Writing. Joan's students express disappointment in these British pieces, perhaps because they had waited so long to hear from their British friends and so many students from whom they were anxious to hear sent no writing at all. Also, this writing, which was less personal than much of what had come before, seems to be aimed more toward the GCSE examiner than Joan's students. It is uneven in quality, with pieces like Joshua's so clearly aimed to the examiner that it seems out of place in the exchange. Further, the writing arrives at a time when Joan's students need to reconnect socially to the British audience, having had only some computer mail to help them maintain social connections in the second semester. Also, this writing arrives so late in June that Joan's students have little time to read it and to attend to the more interesting pieces. As Joan observes and as the students remark in their interviews, they feel such strong personal ties to the British students that they blame Sue, not her students, for this writing that they have difficulty connecting to.

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[2] A controlled assignment is a feature of the GCSE coursework system. Approximately 20% of the assignments submitted in a portfolio come under this heading. Whereas for the other assignments the students have extended time and can do their work at home, the controlled assignments have to be done in class under supervision. Students work alone but across a number of class periods; for this controlled assignment they had three 70-minute periods. The controlled assignments are used to check that the quality and accuracy of the writing in general represents fairly the students' ability. If there is a marked discrepancy between the controlled and other writing, the examining consortia become suspicious.

Conclusions. As Joan's students write about their own rash deeds, Joan notes that at this point in the year her students are conscious of who their audience is. She asserts, "There's a social element with this for the kids. Socially they care about this audience in some way, and they want to connect socially and that's the motivation. So then the social can bring in some of the academic things" (Interview, February 24, 1988). Joan also notes in her analysis of the exchange that the British audience allows her students a performance opportunity, something that becomes particularly apparent at this point in the year (Cone, 1989). Some of Joan's students indicate that the British audience inhibits them, since they feel that they must put forth a particular kind of persona or that Joan wants them to, the result being that they have difficulty especially on this rash deed tasks of just letting go and being themselves.

U.S. Personal Letters

On April 19, after not having heard from their British friends for awhile [the British Shakespeare papers do not arrive until June], Joan's students write letters. These single-authored letters are addressed usually to two or three British students, although some are written to individuals. All the U.S. focal students write a letter, with great variation in how elaborate they are (see Table 6.2).

At the most elaborate end, Geya, in a 1,047 word piece to Sarah, Garney, and Andrew, begins with friendly letter form which includes informal talk about exchanging personal letters, writes a relatively brief but moving section about her life at school and at home, and then concludes with a lengthy report about a program on AIDS at a school assembly that week, replete with facts about the disease. Geya begins:

> April 19,88
>
> Dear Sarah, Garney, and Andrew,
>
> Hi, how are you? I was sitting in my class room wondering when were your class was going to write again. I was hoping to get a letter or something mailed to my house by one of your class mates, but I just realized that I forgot to write my address on my autobiography or on any of the papers that I sent down there. This time I will not forget to write it down, so I will write it down at the end of this letter.
>
> Man I don't even know what to talk about. My life isn't really exciting or anything, you know. Well here it goes.

She continues under the heading "My Life":

> Everyone at school that knows me says I'm a nerd, the reason for that is because I like to write. Whenever I am suppose to write a paragraph I don't, I write a page. Everyone tells me that I wrote a book, and that really makes me angry.
>
> Now let me tell you about home life.

Here she discusses her desire to go to the Upward Bound Program at U.C. Berkeley and her mother's insistence that she stay at home. Then she returns to her school life and includes complementary words about her teacher:

> IN Mrs. Cones's class one of my favorite teacher's she make me feel good about myself and she doesn't say well you ought to just stick with something simple. She just let's you think about it and if you would like to take a challenge and if you think that you could actually do it, then she would encourge you to do so.

Finally, under the heading "Something Else," she writes about the AIDS program.

> Oh yes I forgot to tell you something on Friday April 15,88 We had an assembly. An assembly is when some classes come to see some people put on an act that is very true, and we had one that day. They was acting out and pretending that a guy had aids. Aids is a diseases that is sexually transmitted and it can also by giving by or to a person if they use the same needle by shooting heron in any fain in the body. The whole thing is hard to pronounce, but this is what AIDS stands for: Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome...a disease which breaks down a part of the body's immune system.

She continues on with a dense page of facts about AIDS and then asks the British students to pass on information about how one can protect oneself against AIDS:

> I hope you would pass this on and let your friends and associates know how they can protect themselves if they are going to have sexual intercourse. If you help confince your friends or what ever to protect themselves if they are planning on having sexual intercourse (sex) then you would feel good because, you know, you just might be saving someone's life.

Geya finally returns to a description of the story in the assembly: "Well as I was saying before I got into the information. There was a guy name Mark and He had aids." She concludes with her address, as she had promised at the start of the letter. Finally, Geya is clearly engaged at a social level with the U.K. students.

Rose begins her letter to Louise and Marthy with a casual opening:

> Hey! Whtas up? So tell me, why haven't you written to us? We've been wondering what was wrong.

After writing a few words about the weather and final examinations, Rose, like Geya, writes a serious section about the AIDS assembly:

> Last week we had some people come to our school and talk to us about A.I.D.S. And they put on a play for us about it. And they answred alot of questions that alot of the students had. The play was very moving and alot of the people came out cring. Does your school talk about A.I.D.S.? I know it can be a very touchy subject but we do need to know.

Rose then shifts back to teenage personal matters, like driving a car and school field trips and then asks her readers some direct questions:

You know, it's kind of hard to write to people you don't know too well is't it? So let me ask you some qoestions. First I'll ask Louise some questions then Marthy and you can write me back and ask me questions.

Louise: Do you have a boyfriend or is there someone you like? Do you like to party no the weekends? If so what do you like to do? Do you drive yet? What kind of music do you like?

Marthy: Do like anyone in your class? What do you like to do on the weekends? Do you play any sports? If so what kind? Well those are all the questions that I can think of. So good - bye for now. If you want to you can write me at my own address.

Ironically, Cool J., who began the year deeply and immediately involved in the social life of the exchange, seems to be affected now by the slow flow of writing from his British friends. His letter to Tootsie, Lionel, and Kendall, provides the most striking contrast to Geya's:

April 19, 1988

Dear Tootsie, Lionel, and Kendall,

What-up my three homies in that def England. Check this out, It's been a long time since I last heard from you. What's the problem over there, I hope that when you get my letter you will read it and enjoy it and start thinking of something to write to me.

Well now that I have just finshed rosting yal, I'll be nice and write something nice. Toots (Tootsie) thanks for the letter that you wrote. It let me know that someone in England knew what I was talking about. On my autobiography I gave my home address feel free to write me. Well my time is all up, and I hope to hear from you soon.

See Ya
Cool J.

The words for Tootsie refer to her response to his Martin Luther King Jr. paper. Cool J., according to Joan, is having difficulty maintaining his academic motivation and begins to rely on his by now well-developed social relationships with the British class.

Ice T. writes a similarly flirtatious letter to Titch:

DEAR: Titch

This is yours truly ICE T how are you feeling, fine I hope. My classmates and I were woundering when your next letter was comeing. I hope you send us one real soon because we'll be waiting. Titch I picked you because you have something in your letters that make me very happy. There is one favore that you can do for me don't change the way you write. I'm going to tell you a secret but you can't write and tell anybody in this class room. Most people in this class think I'm in love with you but I tell them that I'm not, I tell them that I just like the way you write. Titch I admit I do think you look cute and I do kind of like you. This letter may be boring but I promiss to write better.

Finally, Easy E. writes:

Dear Reg, and Martin how are you doing? Fine I hope. We haven't receved any letters from you also and I was wondering why because everyone in our class want to receve letters from everyone in your class because they are so good.

I can tell you some of the reasons why we havent wrote more letters than we have and thats because we have been so bussy reading books, writting papers, and watching movies that we really haven't had that much time to write you any letters, but today mis cone told us to drop everything and chose two people from England to write to.

I chose you two because I felt your letters were interesting and I was wondering when are are you going to write back to us

Your friend

Easy E.

Conclusions. These letters are for the most part very informal, although both Rose and Geya discuss the serious subject of the recent AIDS assembly. The students all are trying to reconnect socially since they have not heard from their British audience in some time.

U.K. Computer Mail

Meanwhile, the British students are attempting to establish contact via computer mail. McLeod explains that the work on the computers in England comes not only because of the project with NFER but also because, as he notes in his February fieldnotes, most of Joan's students' papers were arriving as printout from the computers and the British students were impressed and wanted their next mailing to be presented equally well.

To complete the computer end of the project, Sue began to organize time for her class in one of the school's two computer rooms, but the most that could ever be managed was one hour per week. For a time she had one computer in her classroom for every lesson, but there was never enough time for her students to do all they wanted. Still they manage to send mail on two occasions, one in early March and another in May.

The Writing. The March mail, written in England in February, consists of seven, multi-authored letters which were composed on computers at Burlington Danes and then given to Alex McLeod on disks so that he could send them to the United States through the Institute of Education computer link. Each piece of mail is addressed either to several of Joan's students or to the class. Most are about 100 words, although one is around 250 words and another around 400.

For the most part, the May mail is a continuation of the earlier batch. For three of the pieces, the offerings are almost identical. Joshua, Kendall, Ahmed, and John, in one of their letters, delete suggestions for a joint project and conclude with "we have been told to write a little message to say goodbye as these pieces of work are due to be sent of SO GOODBYE FROM US AND I, OOPS WE HOPED YOU ENJOYED THE LETTER. BYE." In their other letter they replaced the phrase, " -h oh we have to go!! Sorry, bye for now" with a question for the U.S. students about current films. Tootsie and Swivel send their original piece but with Garney add the following unfinished message:

Hi there!!!

It's us again, yes you've guessed it. It's Swivel and Tootsie but this time Garney is with us (the big s***) We'll leave it up to your imagination to decide what the word is! Jetty isn't here because she fractured her ankle. Eeks. It it's Tootsie here I would like to tell you about something that happened to me when I was five

On two occasions an even more substantial amount of material is added. Louise, Titch, and Sarah write in March:

HI PIPS

THIS LETTER IS BEING WRITTEN TO SAM PARK, ICE T. JONES, AND RUN WEST THIS LETTER IS BEING WRITTEN BY LOUISE RAMSEY, SARAH GATES AND TITCH LEWIS. RUN WEST WE ENJOYED THE STORY ABOUT

> YOUR MUM WE ALL THOUGHT IT WAS JOKES. WE ALSO LIKED SAM PARK'S STORY ABOUT GETING ARRESTED(SOMETHING LIKE THAT HAPPENED TO SARAH AND ME, LOUISE BUT I'LL TELL YOU ABOUT THAT NEXT TIME)
>
> WE HAVEN'T GOT TIME TO GIVE YOU A FULL STORY ABOUT OURSELVES BECAUSE THE LETTERS ARE BEING SENT OF TODAY . SO TO LET YOU ALL KNOW WE WILL BE WRITING TO YOU NEXT TIME.
>
> LOTS OF LOVE
> LOUISE
> SARAH AND TITCH

Then in May, they write a more extended piece—four times as long as the first—about "the worst day of our life." Each girl tells her story in turn, including Sarah and Louise's promised versions of their brushes with the law. These paragraphs function as responses to the U.S. Shakespeare papers that focus on the U.S. student's rash deeds. Sarah shares the following incident:

> FIRST STORY IS COMING FROM SARAH. THE WORST DAY OF MY LIFE WAS JUST BEFORE CHRISTMAS 87. I WENT OUT SHOPPING WITH MY FRIEND I HAD MONEY ON ME BUT I DECIDED THAT I WANTED TO GET MY MUM A PAIR OF SHOES FOR CHRISTMAS .WE WENT INTO A BIG SHOPPING STORE AND ALL THE SHOES WERE IN PAIRS ON DISPLAY ME AND MY FRIEND THOUGHT THAT WE COULD PUT A PAIR ON SO WE DID . WE WALKED OUT OF THE SHOP WE WERE READY TO TAKE THEM OF BECAUSE WE THOUGHT WE HAD GOT AWAY WITH IT. ALL OF A SUDDEN WE FELT A TAP ON OUR SHOULDERS IT WAS A SHOP DETECTIVE. THEY ASKED US TO RETURN TO THE STORE. IT WAS SO SHAMEFUL BECAUSEALL THE LITTLE OLD LADIES WERE TALKING ABOUT US. WE WENT UP TO THE OFFICE AND THE POLICE WERE CALLED AND THEY SAID TO US YOU ARE UNDER ARREST.WE GOT TAKEN TO THE POLICE STATION THEY PUT US IN SEPERATE CELLS TO A MEMBER OF OUR FAMILY ARRIVED THEY ASKED QUESTIONS AND THAT. MY MUM WAS NOT TO PLEASED AND I HAD TO GO BACK TO THE POLICE STATION FOR A CAUTION IT IS JUST SOMETHING I WOULD JUST LIKE TO FORGET.

Lionel, Ream, and Primitive introduce themselves in March as "THE UNHOLY BROTHERS TAKIN' THE TIME TO WRITE TO YALL,FROM THE BIG CITY (THAT'S LONDON TO YOU!!!)." They end their first note, which is similar in length to Sarah, Louise, and Titch's first note, with a promise of more to come, the implication being that the added writing will be a rap. In May they add the following:

> , SMASH AND GRAB
> PULL OUT MY LASER GUN
> SHOOT THE OFFICER
> AND THEN I'M ON THE RUN,
> FLY OUT THE BANK BUST INTO MY CADILAC
> BURN RUBBER ALREADY THEIR ON MY BACK,
> COLD SWEAT PULLIN' OUT MY 45',
> GET OUT MY WAY IF YOU WANNA' STAY ALIVE,
> COLD SHIVER DOWN MY SPINE,
> DOWN THE ALLEY ONE WAY SIGN,
> FIRIN' MY BULLETS,
> ONE BY ONE,

SIRENS SCREAM
BLARES OUT MY SHOTGUN,
A RAGE OF BULLETS I FLY,
ANOTHER SUCKER I LET DIE!!!!!
MC FEAR.

SOME MORE NEXT TIME!
GOODBYE FROM THE UNHOLY BROTHERS!
KEEP COLD MEDINA!!!!!!

Reg and Andi send an entire new piece in May. It is long (just over two pages of half-column densely typed text, or a little over 600 words) and eclectic, marked by turn taking between the two authors. The first part includes a mix of diary and autobiography. The two girls next move to a section entitled, "WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE WORLD" but in fact avoid that topic in favor of comments about British soap operas, including ***Eastenders***, which they heard Joan's group had watched. Finally, they respond to the U.S. rash deeds papers with the comment, "Rel and I really haven't done anything interesting enough to write about, well I can but I'd better not write about it !!!!!!!! (Andi wrote that little passage and I can't remember doing anything irrational sorry !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!)."

Marisa, who had not written in March, sends in May the only single-authored piece and one of the more substantial and interesting letters. After a few words to some of the boys in Joan's class, she writes:

> So let me get to the point, I'm writing about you guys work I think its pretty good ,what do I mean pretty good .Its bloody better than mine,your ideas were original ,they were short and got to the point.And as for your National Hoildays they were really good compared to min,I don't know about the rest of the class because I've never read any of there work. Could someone write and tell what you thought about our work? e.g Autobiography ,National Hioldays and this work on the computers(I wouldn't mine if Easy E. replied) .And what do you guys do in your spare time,outside school.

She concludes with additional questions:

> Do any of you smoke or drink and what do you think about it??, Do you take boyfriends/girlfriends seriously or do you think you've got lots of time for them later??
>
> .Is SEX a taboo subject (Not talked about) when you talk to the opposit sex in a conversation??
>
> Do any of you have jobs?? or don't you think its worth to earn your own money.

When attempting to send the May mail, McLeod has difficulty with the program for uploading the writing and therefore makes hard copies which he sends by post. Unfortunately, the May letters do not arrive in time for Joan's students to reply directly to them.

Conclusions. All in all, the writing Sue's group sends to the United States via computer is shorter than their usual handwritten pieces. The brevity of these computer mailings has much more to do with the lack of computer provision—and of time on the few computers available—than on any reluctance on the part of the British students to write at greater length. Generally their speed on the keyboard is painfully slow. It is remarkable, given these constraints, that some of the pieces carry a strong sense of their writers' commitment to their readers, and their sense of being their friends. Unfortunately, some of the pieces are just too short to convey anything worthwhile. This mail certainly furthers the social ties between the two classes, and in its own informal way also promotes the academic agenda, particularly by providing response and affirmation for the academic work the United States class had been doing.

Some U.S. Choices: Booklets, How to Succeed at El Cerrito High School, Autobiographical Extensions

Toward the end of the year, Joan's students choose among several options for writing. They also work with several instructors: Joan, the teacher of the class that was combined with Joan's, or a volunteer Berkeley graduate student. Some students have time to pursue more than one writing option. Those who contribute to the booklets work in small groups with the different teachers. Another choice is to compose a piece entitled "What you need to succeed at El Cerrito H.S." which has the intriguing aspect of dual audience: a local middle school class and the British exchange group. A final choice, autobiographical·extensions, is selected by only two students, neither of them focal students.

The Writing. Geya writes both a piece for a booklet and one about succeeding at El Cerrito, while Rose and Easy E. contribute only to one of the booklets and Ice T. and Cool J. write how to succeed pieces.

The booklets include adventure stories and myths and contain writing from both Joan's class and the class next door that began working with Joan's group in the second semester. Easy E. and Rose contribute to the same *Adventures and Myths* booklet. In the myth category, Rose coherently summarizes a conflict between Zeus and Hades that led to the creation of hills and mountains on earth. In the adventure category, Easy E. writes about "The Midnight Rider," whom he describes as "a very big man about six foot three and 305 pounds, and he wore a big black mask." A superman figure, "The Midnight Rider" combats the evil "Four Horsemen" who beat up "all the people who didn't agree with what they said." After the Midnight Rider defeats the Four Horsemen, they return for another battle, this time having convinced the Midnight Rider's godson to join them. But their ploy does not work. The godson rejoins his godfather, the Midnight Rider, and together they triumph.

In a separate booklet, produced by another group, Geya writes the longest piece in the class, a 1,630 word adventure story entitled "Gey and Mac." During a storm, Mac falls off his ship, and ends up at "some kind of deserted place" where:

> he [Mac] found some kind of sword and shield, and it was made of something strong enought to cut through pure marble. He said to himself that it must be a gift from the gods. Before he knew it, the shield was talking and it was telling him that there was a helmet somewhere around and it also said that it was a gift from the gods. So then he set off for a very long time and there he saw a beautiful tanned female with long beautiful raven black hair. She had very dark brown eyes and she was a fighter.

The girl, Gey, and Mac become a team, using the magic sword and shield to help them until two evil horsemen steal her away. Mac searches for Gey and after facing great peril rescues her and marries her. Geya's complex story has multiple episodes.

In writing the "How to Succeed" papers, Joan's students recognize the dual audience—writing "either to England or to kids at a nearby junior high"—choosing on an individual basis which to address (Journal, Cone). Somewhat to Joan's surprise a large portion of the group, nine students, apparently inspired by having received the day before a packet of 11 computer letters from the British students the day before, choose to write for the exchange audience, with Ice T., Geya, and Cool J. making this choice. Ice T. addresses both audiences as he begins:

> Dear Portola and Burlington-Danes students,
> What's up! My homeboys and girls in England and Portola! You all should know who this is—your buddy ICE T. I'm going to tell you how to be a good student and kick it at the same time. The school year is almost over and I'm getting pumped for the summer.

Then he writes a list of nine dos and don'ts, each with a reason for following the advice. The list begins:

> 1. Don't get involved with drugs. All this year people have been doing and selling drugs and getting busted and flunking out of school. It's not worth it.

Other items on the list include such things as "Be on time to your classes," "Be responsible," "Don't fight," "Get involved in sports." Ice T. also advises:

> Pay attention to your teacher at all times. When you don't pay attention and you go up and ask what the lessen is the teacher gets mad.

Cool J.'s "How to Succeed Paper" is addressed only to the class in England:

> Hello old chaps in that def England. Cool J. is here again to tell you some things that could help you succeed at El Cerrito High. I'll make a short list and talk about each one. I'm just about finished with the 9th grade year, so I pretty much know about the school.

His list of four items is similar to Ice T.'s. For example, Cool J. too discusses the importance of working well with teachers, although from his own angle:

> 3. Show respect for teachers and classmates: Your teachers can play a very important role in your education. Treat them nice, don't talk back, do as you are told. If you have a problem with one of your teachers then let your parents handle the problem. So remember "your teacher can make you, or break you."

Geya uses this piece as an opportunity to write a letter to the British class in which she embeds the assignment. She narrates her piece and avoids the commands of the list form. Her beginning is different from Ice T.'s or Cool J.'s:

> Hi all you kids in England,
> How are you guys over there? Well over here we all are fine I guess. Well I'm writing to tell you how or and what to do to succeed in school out here. Now if I really hadn't gone through what I'm about to tell you, then I really couldn't tell you now could I? Now what I am about to tell you is going to be the honest truth and you have my word on it believe me.

She discusses the importance of a positive attitude and of avoiding what she considers destructive peer pressure:

> The other way to succeed in school is your attitude. Now if your attitude is rotten just think you're going to be in the worst crowd because they like stuff like that. , you know, the best way to get around is just be yourself; but if your attitude is not worth talking about then you need to change it very quickly because if you don't then there is no one that is going to like you or going to want to be around you but the crowd that is trying to get you to mess up.

Geya then takes the opportunity to conclude her letter by asking the British students to write, using capital letters for emphasis:

> GUESS WHAT? IT'S MAY 25TH AND I AM STILL WAITING TO GET SOME LETTERS FROM SOME OF YOU OUT THERE. I WAS KIND OF HOPING TO RECEIVE SOMETHING TO MY HOUSE FROM AT LEAST ONE OF YOU. I'M TRYING NOT TO GIVE UP HOPE; BUT YOU LEAVE ME WITH NOTHING ELSE TO DO.

Conclusions. Joan's students now show their versatility in reaching multiple audiences—from the students in the exchange, to younger students at their school, to the multiple readers of the booklets.

British Controversial Issues and Another U.S. Choice—Response to England

As the Shakespeare packet is being completed, seven of Sue's students also write about controversial issues and Sue sends these with the Shakespeare pieces. By way of background, Sue's first exchange class had written about controversial issues as an elaborated exchange project and the British research team encouraged her to pursue this kind of work as the year was ending and as her group seemed to have slowed down on their exchange activities. Interestingly, the suggestion for controversial issues papers is first mentioned by Joan in her first letter to Sue in September when she suggests "a persuasive essay to parent or teacher." However, the two teachers never discuss this idea again.

The Writing. The seven controversial issues papers consist of candid treatments of "current problems" including such sensitive topics as racism, drug abuse, arranged marriages, abortion, abuse of animals, violence in sports, and apartheid. Ten of Joan's students choose to respond to these pieces rather than write a supplement to their autobiographies. According to Joan's June 8 journal entry, they made this choice because they were moved by the British students' candor. The responses represent a special moment in the course of the exchange in that while it was not negotiated in advance, Joan's students' writing is in large part motivated by the unique sense of audience. The exchange works so well, intertwining the students' academic and social needs, in large part because Joan is sensitive to those needs and takes full advantage of moments such as this. Joan writes in her journal that she had originally considered having students write about something important that occurred during the school year and two students do this project, but she essentially dropped this plan for the class when the opportunity arose to respond directly to this writing from the British students. As Joan concludes in her research journal, this response provides a way for her to show "respect for them [her students]."

Of the U.S. focal students only Ice T. and Geya complete responses, both of the response essays in themselves. Ice T.'s response to Sarah's 219 word essay on drugs is itself 347 words. Geya's response is almost twice as long as Ice T.'s and is longer than the piece to which she responds.

Sarah begins her essay: "I am going to talk about drugs because I feel strongly about this issue." She explains why she thinks people turn to drugs—unemployment and despair, boredom, family problems, peer pressure. For example, she writes, "School children and teenagers can be pressurized by friends to take drugs. If that person gives in easily and the person liked it, that is another one who is hooked on it." She then concludes:

> Heroine, cocaine, LSD are what I call heavy drugs, because those are theones you can get addicted to and end up dying from drugs.
> I don't feel so strongly about drugs like weed and hash because I don't think that they are as bad as other stronger drugs. It is likely that if you smoke week or hash, people will say

> that it leads onto heavier drugs, but I don't think that way. Its only if they want to go on to heavier drugs then they will.

Ice T., after complimenting Sarah's "letter," explains about related problems in America, complaining that the police are not cracking down and that his school is infested with drugs. He too discusses the issue of peer pressure:

> When I first got to El Cerrito A kid tried to sell me some crack cocaine I told him that I did'nt want his drugs and that he go to hell. After that all of friend started calling me a punk because I would'nt do drugs. I know alot about drug because I see it everyday at school.

Ice T. also includes a section about a friend who "almost died of Cocaine addiction."

Geya writes a response to a piece on abortion. Although she addresses it to Garney, Geya's response appears to be to Andi's piece which is the only one on abortion. Garney writes about racism. In her response Geya, like Andi, states that abortion is basically wrong, but after a brief paragraph in which she states this point and qualifies it, she quickly moves on to discuss her feelings about teenage pregnancy. She marks this shift: "Now on the mother of the child that is having a child is a different matter, not the murder part but the taking care of the child part." She later reveals:

> . . . all the girls that I know are pregant and are 13-17 yrs. old it seems to me that they are just saying I don't care anymore so getting pregant is the first answer to their supposibly problem and I just don't think it is fair It just hurts my heart to see all the young people getting pregant and don't have a red cent to take care of it.

She concludes that the parents of such pregnant girls must take some responsibility for their daughters' predicaments and writes about how thankful she is that her mother watches, warns, and looks out for her:

> I am so lucky without even knowing it and as soon as I go home today I'm going to thank my mom so much and tell her much I love her and that I'm so glad she taught me the strings and glad that she shows me that she loves me. I believe that if the parents was there when the child needs them then this can prevent alot of pregancies. Don't You Think So!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Conclusions. What is striking about the kind of response dialogue that has emerged in Joan's class is the seriousness of the issues that the students tackle. They have moved far beyond such purely personal experiences and extending those experiences. At this point, they are reflecting on and grappling with important problems that plague our world—from AIDS to teenage pregnancy to drug abuse—and that touch them personally. They care about these issues and they are helped to develop a moral and critical consciousnesses as they write reflectively to students from another country.

U.S. Goodbye Letters

Most of Joan's students write goodbye letters, with all the focal students completing them except Rose, who was absent a great deal at the end of the year because she was having serious family problems. Ice T.'s is typical of the set which is marked by informality and a sense of closure for the project and the relationship with the British students:

> $$$$$$$ ALL ABOUT ME AND THE SCHOOL YEAR $$$$$$
>
> WHAT'S UP! All my homeboys and girls in England. This is yours truly ICE T. Well I'm just chilling. The school year is going to be over in about 7 days and i'll be glad when its over. This school year i've grown 4 in. my hieght is now 5ft—12in. this school year has been boring but I have had my moment like when we started writing to you and when I started playing football again. Run who is also on the football is a very good football player he will be starting at running back this year and I am very proud of myshelf. I have enjoyed writing to you and I just want to say I love all you guys out there in England and I hope you have enjoyed writing to me as much as I enjoyed writing to you.
>
> YOUR FRIEND FOREVER ICE T
>
> P.S. To all the homeboys keep acting fools and stay Coooool.
>
> P.S. P.S. And to all the cute girls out ther I love you and I always will.

Many of the letters conclude, as Ice T.'s does, with a tone reminiscent of the goodbyes that high school students write to one another in their yearbooks.

In these letters most students reveal an important part of themselves. For example, Cool J., about whom Joan had expressed some frustration since he did not sustain his strong start, explains to the British students:

> At the begaining year I was deep in my school work. As the year went on I found out that I could do enough work just to get by. My grades were good, but now they have dropped. But I have learned alot from this year, and I know what to do, and what not to do.

As Easy E. reviews his writing across the year, he explains how his views about the exchange shifted:

> I've been looking over some of the papers that I have wrote at the first part of the year and I found out that I like most of them but some parts I feel different about like when I said wrighting to you would be just another assignment for me.
>
> When I first made this statement I didnt know how much fun it would be to write to you guys. . . . once I new my way around the school and started to meet more and more new people I started to feel good about myself and I really got into writeing to you guys.

Fittingly, Geya includes a tribute to Joan, an important last word that provides an essential insight into why Joan's students seem, across the board, to get so much from their exchange:

> You know what I like about going and being school is my teachers I never knew of a teacher being so understanding and noticable as I noticed with my English teacher Mrs. Cone I mean I noticed when she is really concerned what happens to most of her students that tries to help themselves.

Conclusions

Like the other U.S. teachers, Joan faces a number of institutional constraints that make her teaching life difficult. However, she has an extraordinary talent for keeping the constraints from standing in her way. For example, forgoing much outside consulting that would bring her financial rewards and in spite of a relatively neutral stance from administrators at her school, Joan spends most of her extracurricular energy on improving her school in ways aimed at positively affecting her ability to teach her students. Based on her work at U.C. Berkeley with Professor

Rhona Weinstein and confirmed by her teaching experiences, she and Rhona Weinstein initiated a school-university collaboration. This collaboration resulted in the PACT program which has taken a number of steps toward eliminating ability-level grouping at El Cerrito and toward creating new and improved educational opportunities especially for the students in the lower tracks. In the end, the PACT program led not only to major school-wide innovations but also to ongoing professional collaborations among El Cerrito faculty and administrators and between El Cerrito staff and U.C. faculty. The PACT program also led to improvement in student attendance, achievement, and drop-out rates.

At the school site Joan's leadership within PACT has worked to insure the program's success. Most important, she included her fellow teachers and senior administrators in the program's planning and execution. Since she dispersed responsibility for the PACT project from the outset, the others at her school who helped shape it came to own it too. Also, by collaborating with Rhona Weinstein who brought research and theory for driving the change process, Joan was able to work collaboratively with her teacher peers to affect the changes. PACT also proved successful because Joan and her collaborators were patient enough to let change happen gradually and persistent enough to continue working for their long-term goals. El Cerrito has taken several years, passing through several stages, to modify the tracking system which still separates honors classes from the rest. Each year, the PACT group grows as new teachers see its positive effects.

During the exchange year, Joan's class was still tracked at the lowest level in a four-tier tracking system, while Sue's London class was mixed in ability. Because tracking was being dismantled at El Cerrito during the exchange year, the fact that Joan's class was a low track did not pose the same constraints as the tracking of Susan Reed's class in Chapter 5. Joan had more stable attendance and enrollment patterns than Susan. Still because of their previous years of tracking. few of Joan's students had had previous school experiences reading entire books or writing anything beyond a sentence, or perhaps a paragraph. When Sue reflects back on her year exchanging with Joan, she recalls that originally she was concerned about the mismatch in ability grouping between her class and Joan's. She pays Joan's students the highest compliment when she admits that by the end of the year the mismatch disappeared as Joan's students grew and showed real strengths as writers through the exchange:

> You see I don't think there was such a mismatch in the end between these two classes. . . . The first pieces of work were all very similar to what I would have got from the lower end of this class, but actually when it came to it, there wasn't such a mismatch. (Interview, April 20, 1989)

Although Joan keeps her class for just one year and although she only sees them for one period a day, she manages in this very short time to get to know each student well, both personally and academically. She is in regular contact with their families, getting parents to contribute to a newsletter she edits for her class, calling them about their children so that she can understand her students' needs better; she offers students rides home or to appointments after school; she opens her classroom to students before school, during lunch, and after school when they frequently gather to talk to her about their academic and personal problems as well as their social lives, to work on academic projects under her supervision, to meet with their fellow students, to work on projects they have started on the computers that are housed in her room. In class Joan encourages open discussions about topics that are important to her students and that reveal who they are and what they need. Also, as she gives her students responsibility for planning some of their own activities, she learns about them. Joan's exchange class, like Susan Reed's, is atypically small, undoubtedly also helping her get to know them.

Like Susan Reed, Joan is paired with a British class that is preparing for the national GCSE examinations. Again, the constraints of the British examination system become apparent, especially as the year goes on. Joan's partner, Sue, has fewer problems than Susan's partner, Irene, since Sue does not have to deal with the consequences of a long teacher's strike. At first we hoped that it would be possible for much of Sue's students' writing to serve a dual function, working for the exchange and the examination folder, but as the year went on Sue found this idea more and more problematic, finally virtually impossible. However, the early writing, in which these British students demonstrated vividly their ability to engage, and even to enthuse, unknown readers, to express their individuality and spontaneity, to "find their own voice," gave the exchange an exciting start in both classrooms. Unfortunately, it soon became clear to Sue that, substantially, she would have to add the exchange to an already full curriculum. By the end of the year, Joan's students notice that something negative is happening to the writing coming from England. In her final reflections Sue discusses once again the effects of the examination on her exchange class, noting how difficult it was for her to combine the exchange with the examination:

> I was geared by an examination. I'd forgotton how frustrating I actually found that . . . because it was a nightmare that. . . . I think if they [Sue's students] hadn't have had the restraints of an exam, they would have gone further. (Interview, November 2, 1990)

Within these larger institutional contexts in which the exchange is embedded, Joan creates a close-knit and nurturing classroom community. Easy E. describes the class as "our little family":

> Most of the class was . . . all together in junior high school, and the only thing we just didn't know um, about three people, and Ms. Cone was new. . . . When we got in she just established this was going to be our little family. . . . We would work together, and we would share all types of things, and you know, she made it very clear that . . . she didn't want us teasing each other or nothing like that bad. (Interview, March 21, 1988)

Easy E. then describes how the family atmosphere develops and its effects on his attitudes:

> The first week we were like, "I don't, we don't really know about all this." And so then um, after um, a couple of days we got in the habit of doing the same things, and . . . wow I haven't never did nothing like that. I mean, you know, I was enjoying it, and like when something was wrong, like she would come to me and ask me to help and . . . I was happy for her to come to me, and ask me to help somebody.

He next explains Joan's mother-like caring, her bringing everyone into this family-like community, and her promotion of a sibling-like closeness among the students:

> Everybody's her kid and . . . she takes time and . . . she just really cares for all the students. And you know, she wants everybody to . . . help everybody, and . . . I never um, met a teacher that, you know, did stuff like that. It was just totally different from what I've . . . been through. You know elementary and junior high was real different. And so once everybody . . . recognized what she was doing, everybody cooperated. And the class was, I mean it was great. It was like everybody was a little family. I never been that close with many of my friends like I have now. You know, it was just like in junior high and elementary it was just like I see them every day. . . . Now you know my friends come over, spend the night, we go to the movies, and it's just like, some of them are my brothers and stuff you know. We see each other every day at school and it's not like, you know, I go home and then I hang around with my friends at home and stuff here. We spend a lot of time together.

Maintaining the image of Joan as a mother figure, Easy E. gives a specific example of how she differs from his previous teachers:

> Like if uh I missed a assignment, you know, a teacher would just say, "Okay, you have a detention . . . and you got a make it up," or something. She [Joan] will really stick to you

> and make you do it. I mean it's like she's your mother. . . . She really pressures you because she wants you to do good, and you know, most teachers it's just like they give you the grade. But she really wants you to . . . make an effort and try harder.

Demanding and caring, Joan embeds the exchange into this classroom community, helping her students bring the British students into their "family" as she helps them broaden their community and improve their writing. To create her close community, Joan relies on both her interactions with her students and the tone she sets for appropriate student interactions. Students have plentiful time to talk as they work together at the computers and on group projects.

When Sue reflects on the differences and similarities between teaching and learning written language in the United States and the United Kingdom, she suggests a contrast that also surfaces on the national surveys, a British concern with content and creativity versus a U.S. concern with quality and critical work:

> I always sort of felt that from the materials we received and the conversations I had with Joan that maybe the British teachers were more concerned with the actual content rather than than the quality of the content. . . . We seem to be more interested in the creative aspect of it rather than the critical or the technical aspect of it. . . . That was just something that that went through my head. It wasn't something that that featured very strongly. But uhm when we were originally discussing topics that we might do with the students, that did come up. . . . Certainly we would anyway encourage more creative responses, and you know for the purpose of the exam they were needed anyway. And I think there was a time when Joan expressed a bit of surprise about that. She felt that the demand would be more for the critical. (Interview, November 2, 1990)

This current British version of creativity has little to do with the creative writing movement, which proposes that students write imaginatively and that all they need is to be stimulated and then they will spontaneously produce wonderful writing. Rather, creativity in the way Sue conceptualizes it places importance not on any particular genre, but rather on the importance of individual responses, regardless of the type of writing, and on the students' confidence that they can express their feelings as well as their ideas, comments, and responses to what they see going on in the world, and that they are aware that these qualities are welcomed and valued in English classrooms. This kind of creativity values process, audience, the relationship between language and experience, and most importantly, a sense of teachers and children working together. Indeed, in the U.S. especially on writing tests, the critical and technical sides are generally more highly valued than this kind of creative side. Furthermore, what is measured is quality of writing, not creativity of content. Sue continues to discuss how she thinks this different focus would affect one's teaching:

> I think that would influence the way you teach, really. And the way you negotiated with pupils because you wouldn't be . . . so insistent on . . . really analyzing. You would want more of a response first. So I think that gives you more freedom in fact. And I think it gives them more confidence. They don't sort of worry that they might get it wrong which relieves them of a lot of pressure.

However, Sue modifies her views when asked if she ever worries about writing quality or about whether her students get the technical aspects right. She says that the new format for the GCSE examinations, with the reduction in the number of required pieces, does encourage a new emphasis:

> I think it demands more quality ah because it does give them time to genuinely draft and redraft and think, and also to sort of think about the way they're expressing their own piece, and also to think about the technical side of the way they're expressing their own piece.

Sue emphasizes that although the critical side has to be covered, students still have some latitude:

> You do have to make sure that the critic side is covered, that there are one or two pieces that show evidence that the student is able to do this and understands it, but even so you can do that through quite a creative piece of writing if you so choose.

Like Irene and Susan in Chapter 5, neither Sue nor Joan perceives any difference in the ways they negotiate with their students. At the time of the exchange, Joan, like Susan, was certainly moving toward a version of negotiated teaching, and like Irene, Sue's band of negotiation was narrowed by the impending examinations. Like John Hickman in Chapter 4, Joan sets motivating contexts for language use as she builds a close-knit community of scholars. Her version of negotiation focuses more explicit attention on social interaction and community than Susan's in Chapter 5, which stresses individualization. Still Joan's community leaves room for a great deal of individual variation. For example, students often work together but they do not have to if they prefer to work alone. As the term goes on, students are given more and more choice about what writing they will do, with different students choosing different options for writing at the end of the year.

Since the exchange year, Joan has continued to refine her notions of negotiated teaching and has written about her current ideas as part of her classroom research on her twelfth grade Advanced Placement English class (Cone, 1990). When she opened this class to any student willing to do the work, she faced an urgent situation that demanded that she make swift and major changes to accommodate the mixture of abilities in her classroom. As in the United Kingdom, the shift toward mixed ability necessitates changes in classroom structures. As Joan writes, "Creating opportunity was not enough—I had to learn how to teach an untracked class" (Cone, p. 2, 1990). She then explains what she learned:

> These major changes involved collaborating with my students and sharing responsibility with them.
>
> . . . .
>
> This collaborative atmosphere invited students to move from reflecting on and evaluating class dynamics and tasks to assuming ownership of the curriculum. . . . Once it was clear that I was willing to share responsibility for the class with them, they began to negotiate many things with me—due dates, numbers of revision drafts, film selections, book discussion formats. The most exciting area of shared responsibility was the choosing of their literature. From their first discussion of which book they would buy and read, it was clear they knew what was class literary fare and what was outside reading and that, as the teacher, I had the final say. But it was also clear that I trusted them to select challenging books and they did. Among the books they chose: *Iron and Silk*, *Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant*, *Of Love and Shadow*, and *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. I most vividly remember the day Venus said she wanted to read *Room of One's Own*. There we were with three weeks left in the school year, the AP test over, the senior ditch day and prom only days away. It was time to relax and Venus was asking us to read Virginia Woolf. They'll never go for this, I thought. But they did—they read it, groused about its unfamiliar allusions and serious tone, but discussed it with real passion and insight. And they led me to see the brilliance of it—something I had resisted for years, after struggling with it on my own as a college junior and swearing I would never subject my students to it. (pp. 4-5)
>
> . . . .

> Opening up AP English to all students willing to commit to a challenging curriculum led me to another discovery. If I wanted to effect change in my students, I had to move away from the front of the classroom, I had to share responsibility for teaching and learning with them, and I had to give my students real choices about their education. (p. 6)

Like Susan Reed in Chapter 5, Joan has continued to move away from the front of the classroom. However, their forays among their students have taken different paths. Even within the context of one year Joan moves slowly, gradually releasing control as Susan does from the first to the second year and much in the way British teacher Kate Chapman describes in Chapter 3. Joan also focuses explicitly on community-building as the vehicle for promoting individual growth. To this end, the group, not individuals, choose a book, which everyone then discusses. In essence, Joan meets the needs of individual students, but through group processes.

Moving back to the exchange year, Joan's classroom community proves a powerful stimulus for student growth. Joan allows her students their moments of informality; she encourages them to let their voices out. And she also provides them with occasions to write engagingly but more formally as well. In addition, she provides plenty of support for them as they read the writing from England, helping them connect to the writers and then to use those connections to make their own academic progress. The British students serve as both audience and model. Joan's students show growth first through how they come to know their distant audience and actually allow writing to find a place in their lives. When first faced with the prospect of corresponding with and otherwise writing for an unseen peer audience in the United Kingdom, Joan's students express several concerns. Unlike composing for their teacher in school assignments—or for that matter writing personally to friends—the British audience to be addressed seems somewhat amorphous, unknown, and perhaps unknowable. Though Joan's students are presumably acquainted with having their work read by several classmates in peer response activities, the British students represent a readership which is relatively unfamiliar. This lack of shared context disturbs some students, especially at the outset, a situation they, with Joan's help, seek to remedy in a number of ways during the course of the year as they develop a sense of distant audience. Easy E. shows this growth by his end-of-the-year comments on the reader in his head:

> I was like talking to the whole class but it was, it seemed to me, like it was just one person, like the whole class was one person. And so, because . . . it's real hard too, to tell you the truth, you know, because you don't see the person. (Interview, June 10, 1988)

The first letters from England are key in providing Joan's students with some shared ground. Once they feel comfortable with the British audience, they want to reveal themselves through their writing. They come to consider students in Sue's class their friends, and work hard to develop personal voices and create writing personas so that they can present themselves appealingly to the British students. They want to be liked and respected by the British group in the same way that they want to be liked and respected by their classmates. As the students come to know their distant audience and as writing to them takes on important functions, the writing finds a place in their lives.

While recognizing that engaging these students, allowing literacy to function for them, and helping them connect to an unknown audience are major accomplishments, we were still concerned that students were deriving more social than academic benefits. If Easy E.'s own assessment is right, the exchange succeeds on the academic level precisely because it takes seriously the students' social needs. He explains what he has to do to consider his audience:

> It was like this is no homework, this is no class work, no assignment or whatever. This is um, you know, a friend that you, you want this person to understand what you're saying,

> and what you're talking about. And, you know, you just want to, make it interesting and clear. And once you get all that added up, you know, you just, I mean nothing else really matters. You got to make sure this is perfect.

Easy E.'s goal is nothing less that to make his writing "perfect." He thinks about whether his writing will be "interesting" and "clear" to his readers. To make his writing clear, he says, "you would explain what you were talking about." He monitors for clarity in the following way: "I would stop, okay, then I would read, and then I would be like, um, no this isn't right, you know, they might not understand." He thinks his writing that is not for the exchange is clearer now than it used to be. He claims, "It's more clearer, I'm taking my time, um to make it . . . so you can understand. . . . I'm not in no rush."

In her writing about the exchange, Joan provides evidence both of the students' progress in their writing for the exchange and of a carryover of this progress to their other writing. She explains:

> Even on quizzes, my students grew expansive, retelling the plot when I asked for it and then commenting on it or predicting what would happen next or adding details about the books' subject matter that they had learned in other classes from other sources. Their writing on Jean George's *Julie of the Wolves* illustrates this point. At one particularly moving part I asked my students to analyze the main character. Why had the young Eskimo girl run away from her husband? Geya wrote two pages—trying out six different explanations for the girl's actions. Ice T., too, seemed to delight in using the quizzes to show off knowledge, knowledge he had gained earlier and, in the context of our writing and discussion, had an opportunity to share. (Cone, 1988, p. 8)

When asked whether he could apply what he learned about writing for the exchange to writing for school next year, Easy E. reflects:

> I was writing to some friends, and so then I cared about what I was writing, and then, you know, that slowed it down and, you know, I took my time and, you know, I got it all finished, and that would be a way I would write to a teacher. I would make sure everything's, you know, as best as it could be.

CHAPTER 7—LOOKING ACROSS THE EXCHANGES

We now look across the four exchanges to answer the two research questions which motivated this study:

1. What institutional supports and constraints are associated with the teaching and learning of writing in schools in the United States and Great Britain—at the national, district, and school levels, and at the classroom level?

2. In each country, what characterizes the classroom cultures in which adolescent writers report and interpret their ideas and their wider cultural experiences? In these varied classroom cultures, what are the patterns of writing development for individual students in the United States and across the United States and Great Britain? In particular, how are students' broader social needs integrated with their academic needs?

Since the main goal of this research is to provide information to help improve the teaching and learning of written language in the United States, we use the comparisons with the British system to look in new ways at schooling in the United States, to stimulate our thinking, to question what we take as given. From this perspective, the data from the exchanges are most useful as they highlight those weaknesses in U.S. schools that become apparent when compared with strengths in the British system. Had our goals been to improve British education, we would have highlighted weaknesses of the British system. Indeed, the British research team may at some point use these data for just that purpose. Even though we focus on weaknesses in the U.S., we want to emphasize that we are not arguing that the U.S. system is generally worse than the British system. Clearly, each system has strengths and weaknesses.

We also want to say at the outset that all of our findings do not take the form of clear contrasts across the two countries. In many important areas we found tensions that might reflect national trends but that also crossed national boundaries. Our findings show that on many issues, drawing clear-cut contrasts would create unwarranted national stereotypes. In these cases, we have attempted to show the complexity of the trends and the interesting issues surrounding the tensions.

Institutional Supports and Constraints

The institutional supports and constraints for education vary in the two countries. Given the perspective we have taken, to highlight strengths in the British system that point to weaknesses in the U.S. system, the cross-national comparisons have led us to question a number of accepted ways of supporting the teaching and learning of writing in the United States. Across the four exchanges, the following points of comparison are most salient: (a) the role of the teacher as professional, in particular how that role does or does not benefit the teacher's school; (b) the school and curricular supports for getting to know students and understand their abilities and interests in order to develop effective working relationships with them—in particular community school structures; subdivisions within the school; class size; the span of time teachers spend with a class of students; (c) ability grouping, whether the classes are mixed-ability or are grouped by ability level, and the effects of grouping on students' opportunities to learn; and (d) policies regarding national examinations and implications for teaching and learning in the classroom.

Teachers' Professional Roles: Separated or Integrated

Across the exchanges, teachers of all four British classes have professional posts at their schools that do not exist for their counterparts in the United States. Beginning with the most senior, John Hickman is Senior Teacher; Irene Robertson is Head of Communications; Sue

Llewellyn is Head of Drama and Deputy Head of English and Drama; and Kate Chapman is Acting Deputy Head of English. As Senior Teacher, John assists in the preparation of new English teachers. He works with university lecturers, and meets with and generally takes charge of clusters of student teachers assigned to his English department. He also is in charge of organizing in-service programs for the entire school faculty and for overseeing all "probationers" (newly-hired, first-year teachers) across all the departments in the school. As Head of Communications, Irene oversees all language teaching as well as English. She supervises the staffing and in collaboration with other teachers, the curriculum of a number of departments. She also oversees "probationers" in the varied communications departments. As Head of Drama and Deputy Head of English, Sue advises other English teachers about drama teaching and produces the school's plays and musicals. As Acting Deputy Head of English, Kate supervises the "probationers" in her department; handles disciplinary referrals from other English teachers; substitutes for the Head when he is absent; coordinates all the sixth-form, A level English courses and acts as the liaison between the examination board and her school; and coordinates the grading of the GCSE Literature examinations at her school as well as acts as liaison between her school and the national examining board. An even more important role for John and Irene substantially, and for Sue and Kate to some extent, is in making the English department a forum where ideas, theories, and practices are regularly discussed. In regular department meetings, often quite long, teachers share ideas, learn from each other, and become a collaborative group with a strong sense of purpose. Heads of such departments do not issue instructions; they consult, argue, discuss, and work towards a consensus.

Although these teacher promotions in England are not steps out of the classroom, they involve some reductions in teaching responsibilities and increases in salary. Since different schools give different amounts of released time for extra duties, the class loads of these teachers vary, not always in exact relation to the scope of the duties themselves. A normal teaching load in England is approximately six or seven classes per week (about the equivalent of five U.S. classes since in England classes meet fewer hours per week than in the U.S.). John teaches five classes per week, Irene and Sue teach four, and Kate teaches seven.

None of the U.S. teachers had any released time although those with mentor grants received extra compensation for doing a project they proposed. All, however, volunteered time to contribute in some way to their schools' growth—Judy through the GATE Program, Robin through her work as seventh-grade chair and through the SUPER Project, Susan through her service as department chair and through her organization of the Write Team, and Joan through the PACT Project. With the exception of Joan, who also managed to contribute in the kind of sustained ways that lead to a reshaping of the school's vision, none of the others had the time or resources or the school-level support to go this far. All of the U.S. teachers remained deeply involved in consulting activities for other schools and school districts, for Susan and Robin through the National Writing Project, for Joan through the National Writing Project and through her efforts to spread the PACT Project, and for Judy through her women's studies projects. On the whole, these external efforts benefitted the teachers' schools only minimally—mostly as they contributed to the growth of the teacher herself.

In England, then, the teachers have received and remain in line for promotions that give them increasing levels of out-of-class responsibilities that are well-integrated into the structures of their schools, allowing them to use their positions to contribute in important ways to school improvement and to receive compensation and full credit for their efforts. By contrast, U.S. teachers rarely have such opportunities. Since most U.S. school districts do not have a progression of jobs (called scale posts in England) for teachers, these talented U.S. teachers all spend some of their own time volunteering to improve their school but much more of their time on consulting opportunities that take them away from their schools. This state of affairs often creates tensions at the school site since administrators define the teachers' job as pretty much bounded by the four walls of the classroom. The British and U.S. educational systems are structured to encourage and sustain these differences. Current calls in the United States for the development of teacher promotion scales mimic the British system; however, the calls have been slow to be heard, and when they have been heeded (e.g., merit pay and teacher mentor programs), they have brought their own problems as they have patched rather than revamped the profession of teaching.

Besides the fact that extra duties in the United States remove teachers from their schools, a number of areas of educational practice are impoverished because no one assumes the important leadership roles that are part of the British teachers' jobs. For example, there are no easy ways to give first-year teachers a trial period in which they receive plentiful support as they make the transition into teaching. This kind of support structure seems a critical component to add to the education of new teachers and an important way to protect their students. It also provides a structure that can help the profession support and thereby retain promising new teachers at the same time it makes good use of the expertise of experienced teachers. Second, in the States there are few well-structured ways for schools to collaborate with universities in initial teacher education, with experienced teachers at the school site taking on major responsibilities. Finally, although there has been a tradition in the United States of school divisions that include posts for department heads, that post has been one of the first to be diminished with the onset of budget cuts. Susan Reed's situation of serving as English department chair with absolutely no compensation provides a telling example. Although Robin receives some extra salary for her post as seventh grade chair, she receives no released time. Also, often department chairs perform jobs that are as much bureaucratic as conceptual, wasting valuable resources that they could contribute.

Unlike in the States, teachers in England see administrative jobs as natural leadership extensions to their teaching jobs. Even a job that is equivalent of the U.S. school principal is seen as an instructional leadership position that only an outstanding teacher is qualified to assume. By contrast, although the literature on school reform in the United States shows a complete understanding of the importance of the principal assuming the role of instructional leader (e.g., see Deal & Peterson, 1990), the school culture does not help nurture and then gradually promote able teachers to move into such positions. To do that would require pushing beyond rethinking and redefining the job of principal to a consideration of how to restructure the entire profession of teaching in ways that will prepare the most able teachers to assume the newly defined leadership posts and meet new demands. In the British trajectory of teacher promotion, teachers move on to get promotions, like those held by John, Irene, Sue and Kate, and beyond those posts to jobs as Headteachers, roughly the equivalent of the principal in the United States, or English advisors for Local Education Authorities, roughly the equivalent of curriculum specialists in a school district. Furthermore, teachers are used to moving from one school to another to accept promotions since few teachers reach senior positions without several moves, John Hickman being a rare exception.

Over the years, these kinds of varied leadership opportunities in British schools have given the British teachers both a strong senses of professional identity and ongoing ways to contribute to making needed large-scale changes in instructional practice. Teachers have pushed for mixed-ability teaching; for classrooms full of student talk, with teachers assuming collaborative roles as they negotiate activities with their students; for extended writing that involves students in thinking deeply and using their "critical imaginations." In the United States the classroom teacher has less of a voice in movements for educational reform, in large part because there is little way for teachers to grow into leadership positions that involve managing the educational system itself. When U.S. teachers do try to speak, their voices too often are ignored, to the detriment of U.S. education.

Getting to Know Students: School and Curricular Organization

Schools in Great Britain are structured differently from schools in the United States, with many of the structures designed to create a close community within the school that will help teachers get to know their students. The goal is to establish a social atmosphere in which the students are comfortable and that is supportive of their learning. At Northumberland Park where

Kate teaches, the *Teachers' Guide* (1986), written at the school each year, explains the responsibility the school assumes for building a culture that is "seen to serve 'people'" and that maintains "a high reputation for meeting the needs of the community." As the *Guide* puts forth:

> "If you want something to happen in a large organisation, you must structure it to happen."
>
> . . . .
>
> It is essential that we see the "system" in perspective and develop structures to suit our needs; it is counterproductive for us to allow the "system" to tyrannise us. (p. 4)

Overall, the exchanges show that teachers in the United States, even in the smaller middle schools, work within institutional contexts in which it is difficult to get to know their students. The characteristics of the British schools that help them support this value include: (a) community school structures; (b) subdivisions within the school; (c) small classes; and (d) long spans of time for teaching the same group of students.

Community Schools

Two of the four British schools are community schools, a label and concept not generally used in the United States. In England, the idea of the community school came about in the 1970s when a number of Local Education Authorities and some of their schools set out to make strong links between those schools and the public they serve. The idea has been to bring the community into the school, making the school a comfortable place for children and families from varied ethnic communities. A community school receives extra funding from its borough to extend its activities and the services it offers.

Forest Gate, where John Hickman teaches, and Gladesmore, where Irene Robertson teaches, both have the special status of community schools. Both Forest Gate and Gladesmore have forged links with the communities they serve, first of all, by designing the regular curriculum to take into account particular community needs, insofar as they can be articulated, of the local communities. For example, because of the linguistic diversity of its surrounding communities, Gladesmore recognizes, values, and teaches community languages. Besides designing the curriculum to account for its communities, Gladesmore has representatives among its School Governors (like the School Board in the U.S.) from several surrounding ethnic communities, with the chair, Surinder Atarawala, a Sikh. At Forest Gate John feels that these aspects of the school's efforts have been achieved only partially.

Both schools also have forged community links by setting aside space for community activities. Forest Gate has two community rooms in the school building where there are classes during the day for members of the community. In addition, regular classes for the GCSE and for A levels are open to community members. In the evenings the entire school is open to the community. Gladesmore maintains a large community building, open all day and also in the evenings when the main school buildings are used as well. It also provides meeting rooms for local groups, and it serves as the meeting place for a very popular youth club, not restricted to current school students. Both schools have signs that welcome visitors in several languages. Both schools also house a nursery where parents may bring their pre-school children when they attend class or when they need childcare for personal reasons. The nursery is supported by community funding and is free for parents. Gladesmore's nursery is actually run by the parents.

All these activities that bring in the larger community make the school the kind of place where children and their families feel as though they belong. In such an environment it becomes possible for teachers to get to know their students and their students' families. The other schools in England and the schools in the U.S. try to welcome families, but the lack of resources to establish programs for families gives much of the responsibility for community building to the individual teacher, making the task more difficult for them than it is for Gladesmore and Forest Gate staff.

School Subdivisions

Although secondary schools are large in both the United States and in England, one way to make them more intimate is to subdivide them into smaller units. The British secondary schools in the exchanges all include the equivalent of U.S. grades six through twelve, with enrollments ranging between 900 and 1200. However, for the first five years the British schools are subdivided into year groups and then within each year group, into seven or eight tutor groups of approximately 25 students each. In the last two years, school is no longer compulsory, and few students are still enrolled. By contrast, in the United States, the schools for the younger students, middle schools for grades six through eight, are slightly smaller than the British schools, with the enrollment at Everett 850 and at Albany 586. The U.S. high schools, covering grades nine through twelve, are significantly larger than any of the British schools, both with enrollments of about 1500. In both U.S. middle and high schools, year groups are much larger than they are in British schools. Goodlad (1984) found, "Most of the schools clustering in the top group of our sample on major characteristics were small, compared with the schools clustering near the bottom" (p. 309). He argues forcefully for high schools of no more than "500 to 600 students," suggesting that those in favor of larger schools bear the burden of proving them better (p. 310). Goodlad's solution to the problem of existing large facilities is to divide them into "houses," much like the small "colleges" within some large universities (e.g., Universities of California at Santa Cruz and at San Diego or Yale University).

In all the British schools, the year groups are organized by a head and deputy head, who hold periodic meetings with the students across the year. The tutor groups are each assigned to a teacher, who generally oversees the same group for the five compulsory years of secondary school (Forms 1-5, U.S. grades 6-10). For the first three years of secondary school, until the students begin their GCSE courses, they take most of their classes with their tutor group. The form tutor meets with his or her tutor group two times a day: once at the beginning of the day in a homeroom when attendance is taken and then another time during the day for an attendance check. In addition, throughout the five years, the tutor group meets once a week for one period for personal and social education, when the group discusses topics such as friendship, teachers, bullying, sex education, careers, and the like.

The year and tutor-group units are part of the system of pastoral care which focuses attention on the students' personal welfare in the school setting. In the British system "pastoral" is complementary to "academic." The Northumberland Park *Teacher's Guide*, from Kate Chapman's school, explains that teachers' roles "are both pastoral and academic." From the pastoral point of view, group tutors are "to KNOW and be directly responsible within the school for each individual student within the tutor group." The tutor is also "To be the 'first line of action' in helping each student to cope with her/his difficulties. Sometimes this will demand a disciplinary response, at others the offering of a listening ear or helping hand, at others the sharing of ideas and experiences." The tutor also reports about the students in her or his tutor group to the "Head of Year"; serves as "a 'resource person' to other members of staff"; keeps the students' records up to date; "co-ordinate[s] the subject reports to parents and give[s] a coherent report on the 'whole' student"; "make[s] him/herself known to the family of each student. . . and . . . interpret[s] to the parents the philosophy and practice of Northumberland Park Community School"; and finally, meets with other tutors of students in the same year and makes "a positive contribution to the development of the Year team and the ethos of the year" (p. 33).

There are no formal subdivisions of this sort in any of the U.S. schools. The smaller size of the U.S. middle schools is meant automatically to provide this kind of community; however, these schools are not that much smaller than the British secondary schools. Also, although all the teachers in this study felt responsible for more than the students' academic progress, the part of their job having to do with their students' social welfare is not recognized or formalized as it is in England. Rather guidance counselors who are often in short supply are supposed to perform many of these pastoral duties, but they normally work with individuals, without the emphasis on the supportive role a close and caring community can play.

Class Size

These teachers perceived that class size has definite effects on how well they can get to know their students. One striking contrast between these British and U.S. classes is the smaller class sizes the British teachers enjoy. Except for Joan Cone's class, which for her is atypically small at 19, every British class is smaller than its U.S. counterpart. Across the four U.S. classes, 113 students are enrolled while across the four British classes, 90 students are enrolled, a difference of 23 students across four classes.

In Great Britain, teacher unions mounted a vigorous campaign, nationally, for a maximum of 30 students in a class, and in London for a maximum of 25. These targets have generally been achieved. The norms for U.S. schools are generally between 30 and 35, with class sizes even going above 35, as was the case for Judy Logan who taught 37 students. The magnitude of the losses, from these teachers' points of view, are clear when we listen to Judy Logan talk about the activities she has dropped and when we watch what Joan Cone and Susan Reed do with their atypically small groups. Maeroff (1991) emphasizes the importance of teachers' perceptions of class size, independent of empirical data on the effects of smaller classes on student achievement:

> The debate over class size is surely one of the most exasperating controversies in education. Common sense dictates that smaller is better, yet findings from research produce no consistently compelling evidence that this is so. . . . Teachers may pay a price for having larger classes even if adding students to a class does not undermine learning. Is it advantageous, in other words, to tolerate large classes if doing so is apt to demoralize teachers and perhaps drive them from the profession, regardless of the effect on student achievement? (p. 56)

In this study, we watched up close how conditions that perpetuate large classes contribute to demoralizing teachers and to keeping schools from creating the kinds of safe and caring environments students need.

Multi-Year versus Single-Year Classes

British teachers have a longer time to get to know their students than teachers in the United States do. British teachers routinely keep the same students for two years and often for longer. Kate Chapman and Irene Robertson have their groups for two years; John Hickman and Sue Llewellyn have theirs for five. In the United States teachers rarely keep the same students for longer than a semester or year. Susan Reed's positive experience when she was able to keep her group almost intact for a second year shows the community-building and writing growth a U.S. teacher can nurture when she has the same class for longer than one year.

Tracked versus Heterogeneous Learning Communities

All the British classes in this study are mixed-ability whereas three of the four U.S. classes are tracked. Before selecting tracked classes, the U.S. research team attempted to locate mixed-ability groups but could not find many. Mixed classes were easier to find in England because at both the primary and secondary levels, mixed-ability teaching is promoted and has become institutionalized in many British schools, especially in the London area. In comparison, secondary schools in the United States remain highly tracked (Freedman & McLeod, 1988b).

Ironically, research in both countries supports mixed-ability teaching (e.g., Goodlad, 1984; Jackson, 1964; *Mixed Ability Work in Comprehensive Schools*, 1978; Newbold, 1977; Oakes, 1985; Postlethwaithe & Denton, 1978; Rosenbaum, 1976; Slavin, 1990). The research shows first that mixed-ability grouping increases achievement for students labelled average and low ability and that high ability students do just as well as they do in high-tracked classes. The research also shows that mixed-ability grouping raises teachers' expectations for their students and raises the level of instruction to match what occurs in the high tracks. Finally, the research shows that the lower tracks are populated with high proportions of minority students, who, it could be said, are victims of racist practices. Oakes (1985) argues that the social stratification that results from ability grouping not only reflects but also perpetuates institutionalized racism. In all, students in low-tracked classes, across time, are likely to receive inadequate instruction, show inadequate levels of achievement, develop poor attitudes, and be victims of racist practices.

The contrasts in grouping practices in the exchange classes stimulated a number of interesting discussions on both sides of the Atlantic. From their cultural vantage point, the British teachers were shocked when they discovered that mixed-ability classes were not easy to find in U.S. secondary schools. The British teachers consider tracking a discriminatory practice, especially for those labeled "slow learners." Their impressions understandably were reinforced when faced with the disproportionate numbers of ethnic minority students in Susan's and Joan's lower-tracked classes and of white students in Judy's gifted class. It is important to emphasize that both Joan and Susan opposed the tracking policies at their schools and throughout the study worked especially hard and quite self consciously in their low-tracked classes against low expectations and low levels of instruction.

Most perplexing is why tracking has been such a persistent practice in the United States. One reason might be the fact that U.S. teachers and others close to the schools have not in any significant numbers pushed for a shift to mixed-ability teaching. They stand in contrast to their British counterparts who embraced research on ability grouping in large enough numbers to make change happen as they argued vocally against the inequities of tracking. U.S. teachers seem to feel stymied by conditions in the schools, noting that schools are not organized in ways conducive to mixed-ability teaching, especially given the large class sizes. Goodlad (1984) explains the resistance to the research findings in the United States:

> Tracking appears to be such a rational, commonsense solution to a vexing problem. . . . The more sensible or rational the conventional wisdom appears to be, the more difficult it is for research findings to penetrate. And when following the conventional wisdom promises to make a difficult practical problem more manageable, these findings have a difficult time gaining a hearing. (p. 151)

Also, as we noted earlier, without the ability to obtain positions of increasing responsibility, U.S. teachers end up with less power to change the structures of schooling. Finally, we believe that such structural changes are more likely to occur when the professional role of teachers within their schools are linked with professional and advisory institutions at the national and local levels, as they commonly are in Britain.

Another obstacle to mixed-ability teaching in the United States centers around the ways classrooms are traditionally structured. To teach secondary English successfully to mixed-ability groups requires a workshop-like organization, in which teachers have time to attend to the abilities and needs of their varied students, to build a classroom community from diverse groups, to stimulate a great deal of social interaction. Jackson (1964) describes the characteristics of the best

British mixed-ability classrooms, and in so doing puts forth a vision of successful mixed-ability teaching:

> The teaching techniques were usually different—with less [whole] class work, and much more small group and individual work [in unstreamed schools]. . . . I record as an impression that unstreamed schools replaced competition by helpfulness, and had re-created in large schools the friendly atmosphere I noted in small ones. For example, in most of the streamed schools it was an offence for one child to turn to another for aid with an arithmetical problem. This was 'copying' to be punished. Yet in most of the unstreamed schools this turning of one child to another was constantly encouraged by the teachers, and rewarded with small words of praise. I never spoke to a child who had moved from a streamed to an unstreamed school but I imagine it could be an astonishing experience. Not only the system changes, but the importance of certain lessons, the very position where the teacher stands in class, the relationship of child to child, the whole ethic of the room. (pp. 119-120)

Jackson's perhaps overly romantic and certainly ideal vision includes the orientation of the British teacher to the students' individual needs within a cooperative and socially interactive classroom community. Most U.S. teachers reveal that they focus on the whole class rather than individuals within a classroom community (the current U.S. focus on the curriculum found in Freedman and McLeod's [1988b] national surveys versus the U.K. focus on the development of individual learners). U.S. schools also are seen as having moved away from what Gardner (1983) calls an "interpersonal" focus which is part of "the traditional religious model," in favor of an "intrapersonal" or logical and mathematical focus, which he calls "the modern secular pole" (p. 358). All these instructional trends make mixed ability teaching more difficult.

Although mixed-ability teaching is an important goal, this study has also shown that, in and of itself, it provides no panacea. The experiences of the teachers in the exchanges demonstrate that teaching heterogeneous groups successfully requires new ways of thinking about teaching and learning. Just as we learn from the British examples, we also learn from Judy Logan who, through building her GATE program, shows what high expectations mean; her sixth-graders outwrite many of the older students in the study. The kinds of extended writing Judy promotes surely would benefit all students, as John Hickman's mixed ability group in London shows. We also learn from Joan Cone, who through her work with the PACT program, illustrates what is involved in shifting an entire school from tracking to mixed-ability grouping. To make significant changes, she and her fellow teachers and administrators met weekly with a university partner for an entire school year. Through working together, they were able systematically to raise expectations for all students in the school, especially those in the low tracks. Now two years later, the teachers and administrators still meet weekly. The changes at El Cerrito have come slowly and have been made with care; many teachers at the school still have not joined the PACT group, and remnants of the tracking system still remain in place. Joan demonstrates that a teacher can take a strong leadership role and provide much of the impetus for reforms in school organization. Her experiences also show how teachers must change the ways they teach when working with mixed-ability groups. She is moving toward a kind of classroom organization that shares many features with the classrooms of John Hickman and Kate Chapman in England who discuss specifically how they have structured their teaching to meet the needs of the ethnically diverse and heterogeneous groups that they have been teaching for a number of years. We discuss the classroom structures that can support mixed-ability teaching in some detail the next major section, "Classroom Cultures and Student Growth."

Finally, however, with class size in the United States often over 30 students, with U.S. teachers usually keeping the same class for one year or less, and with the school organization providing few supports to create close communities, even in a tracked class it is hard for U.S. teachers to create interpersonal interactions or to develop a sense of community, much less meet the needs of highly diverse individual learners. This situation is urgent, regardless of tracking policies; for even in tracked classes, if we take a careful look, we will find that students are extremely diverse and have highly varied needs.

Teaching an Examination Class

Although the U.S. currently has no equivalent to the British system of national examinations and certification at the end of secondary school, there is much talk of instituting something similar. President Bush's Education Policy Advisory Committee has urged the development of a system of national examinations, and the MacArthur Foundation has awarded a grant of $1.3 million in matching funds to the National Center on Education and the Economy and the University of Pittsburgh's Learning Research and Development Center to "help launch work on a 'national examination system' that eventually could be used as the basis for high-school diplomas, college admissions, and employment decisions" (Olson, 1990, p. 5). The examinations will be based on a national syllabus, broadly conceptualized, and will involve teachers in all aspects of the planning. There will be three kinds of assessment—performance examinations, portfolios, and projects—across the core subject areas "now envisioned to include reading, writing, math, science, history/geography/civics, and work readiness" (p. 5). The plan also calls for a number of examination boards which would oversee the development and scoring of the exams from their areas; the results of the scoring from these state or local boards, however, would be calibrated to standards set by an independent national board.

The proposed U.S. plan has the following features in common with the British system (see Appendix 1): examination courses; a national syllabus; examination boards; high stakes, including graduation from secondary school and college admissions. The plan also has several distinctive features. Whereas British schools can select an examination board with a coursework only (portfolio) option, the U.S. proposal requires three types of assessment. Whereas British schools can choose to belong to the most philosophically consistent examination board, U.S. schools will be part of their state or regional board, regardless of its leanings.

The British have many years of experience administering national examinations which could prove helpful as U.S. educators consider them. For example, at the time of the exchange study, the British examinations had just been reorganized to include the coursework only (portfolio) option, with schools able to select portfolios only or a combination of portfolio and set tasks written under testing conditions. All the teachers in the exchange study felt strongly that the portfolio option represented a major change for the better in the British system and that the effects on their teaching were positive.

From the point of view of a U.S. observer, the most negative results of the examinations are the gatekeeping functions, especially acute since there are relatively few slots in higher education in Britain (only about 20% of British secondary students go on to higher education immediately after secondary school as compared to 56.5% of U.S. students [*The Condition of Education*, 1990]) and since examination results determine who gets those slots. For the GCSE a grade of A, B, or C is considered high enough to make a student university-eligible; grades below C generally are not. [1] Students who would be considered very good and who certainly would go to a university in the States routinely do not receive high enough scores on the GCSE examinations to continue their educations beyond the normal British school-leaving age of 16. Table 7.1 shows the examination results for the students in three of the four British classes, John's, Irene's, and

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[1] The cut off for A levels and therefore university eligibility is not always clear-cut. Students generally need at least a Grade C, but schools and teachers have considerable discretion.

Table 7.1
British Examination Results

	Hickman (N=18)	Robertson (N=17)	Llewellyn (N=14)
	Language Examination Results		
A	2 (11%)		
B		1 (6%)	3 (21%)
C	4 (22%)	2 (12%)	4 (29%)
D	4 (22%)	4 (24%)	5 (36%)
E	5 (28%)	2 (12%)	1 (7%)
F	2 (11%)	4 (24%)	
G		2 (12%)	
Number Taking Language Examination	17 94%	15 88%	13 93%

	Hickman (N=18)	Robertson (N=17)	Llewellyn (N=14)
Number Taking Literature Examination	17 94%	4 24%	5 36%

Sue's.[2] In Irene's class, only three of her 17 students received high enough scores on the language exam to stay on to take A levels; K.C. received a B and De Mille and Deenie received Cs. None of Irene's students received A grades in English language. Of the others, four received D, two E, four F and two G; one did not take the examination and another transferred to another school. Only four took the English literature examination, and of those, there were two Ds, one E, and one F. In Sue's class of 22, six did not take either examination or left Burlington Danes; of the 14 taking the language examination, three earned a B (Swivel, Tootsie, and Andi) and four a C (Garney, Ream, Reg, and Marisa). None of Sue's students received an A either. Five of Sue's students received D and one E. Only five of Sue's group took the literature examination and of those, there was one A (Tootsie), two Bs (Swivel and Andi), and two Ds. In John Hickman's class eight of the original group of 26 left his school before taking their exams. Of the 18 who remained, Dickens and Delbert received an A, and Nikita, Drago, Amelio, and Catherine received a C. Of the others, four received D, five E, and two F. Of John's students, all except one who took language also took literature. The literature scores included B for Dickens and Delbert; C for Nikita, Amelio, Bonet, and Catherine; and five Ds, four Es, and one F. Relatively few receive high enough scores to enter university education. A great many of the British students sit behind a closed gate.

The British examination results vary across teachers and across the schools in which they teach. In England the percentages going to university remain much greater in the private schools than in these state-supported schools. In the most middle-class school in the study, Burlington Danes where Sue teaches, the highest percentage of students passed the language examination with a C or better (50% as compared to 33% for John and 18% for Irene). Although the new examinations are regarded by most teachers as a great improvement on the previous system, the examinations have done little to improve the chances of minority students, one of the hopes for the national examinations to be designed for the United States.

We also found that the examination had negative as well as positive impacts on instruction. The two British examination classes, Sue's and Irene's, both had substantially more difficulty melding the exchange and the examiner audiences than the other two classes. Both Sue and Irene ended up incorporating the exchange as an addition to rather than an integral part of their regular curriculum. All in all, the pressures on them were enormous and did not always work to the benefit of the students, with the examinations rather than student experience often used as the main way to give meaning to what students did. It seems that regardless of the design of the examination or the kind of flexibility that it offers, when the stakes of the examination become high, all that matters to the students is the examination itself.

On the positive side, the coursework only option offers important professional opportunities to teachers, both in the collegiality at the school created by scoring portfolios and planning what goes in them and in the opportunities for working with the national boards and bringing back information to the school. John Hickman also notes that he uses the kinds of writing required on the examination as a guide for the range of writing that he will want his students eventually to master. The exams also have some positive influences on teaching and learning interactions in the classroom. In particular, the teacher's role as evaluator decreases. The teacher collaborates with the students to produce and select the writing for the examination folder. Also, the teacher's role as grade-giver diminishes in importance, with the British teachers giving fewer grades than the U.S. teachers and with most grades on portfolios, not on individual pieces of writing. This relative sparsity of teacher-grade-giving permeated John's and Kate's teaching of their younger students as well as the two examination classes. In line with this approach and apparent in much of the writing about portfolio assessment in the United States is the following comment in a recent British publication, *The English Curriculum: Writing*, which aims "to provide material on aspects of English teaching for department-focussed curriculum development" (p. 3):

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[2] Results for Kate's students are not included since they had not yet taken their examinations at the time of the writing of this report. Also, they moved on to new teachers when Kate left for another school.

> Our [teachers'] energies are much better employed in marking less frequently and more reflectively, giving ourselves a chance to look back over a number of pieces of work and to spot and comment on the significant developments and difficulties, than in the rapid-fire, perfunctory attention to a single piece, with no understanding of its place in a writer's recent history. (Richmond, p. 10)

In spite of these potential benefits for portfolio systems of assessment, if we are to learn from the British experience, it is critical that we remember Sue Llewellyn's words as she reflects back on what went wrong in her exchange with Joan Cone:

> I was geared by an examination. I'd forgotten how frustrating I actually found that . . . because it was a nightmare that. . . . I think if they [my students] hadn't have had the restraints of an exam, they would have gone further. (Interview, November 2, 1990)

Classroom Cultures and Student Growth

The opportunity to exchange writing with students from another country, we thought, would automatically motivate students to want to write, by meeting their personal and social needs. We also thought that if students were exchanging writing, it would be easy, at the same time, for teachers to engage them in long-term projects that would challenge them to achieve new literacy levels. We envisioned all the participating classes involved in highly demanding writing activities that students would find naturally meaningful as they communicated with real audiences for real purposes. We quickly learned that an activity, even a theoretically sound one like the exchange, is in and of itself lifeless. Nothing happens automatically. As the exchanges came alive in different classrooms, they took on a variety of personalities—with participants who had varied ideas about literacy learning and the role the exchange might play, with varying amounts and kinds of response coming from abroad, and with teachers and students depending on that response to varying degrees.

Life inside the classrooms in the exchange study reveals two major tensions surrounding instructional decisions, both of which have consequences for student learning. The first involves tensions between meeting students' social and their academic needs, the resolution making a difference in how fully students engage in literacy activities, what they learn, and the scope and kind of writing they do as part of the exchange. The second involves tensions between focusing on curricular activities and individual students, the resolution making a difference in what teachers know about and how they attempt to meet the developmental needs of their students. How these tensions are resolved suggests how the varied classroom cultures influence students' opportunities for literacy growth, with important implications for how students develop as writers and how teachers meet the needs of varied learners who have different ways of learning and patterns of growth. Taken together, these classrooms provide key pieces in the complex puzzle that is the teaching and learning of writing.

Attention to Students' Social and Academic Needs: Creating a Base for Writing Growth

We now look across the exchanges at the ways these eight teachers meet their students' social and academic needs. Generally, the exchanges are most successful when teachers create environments in which students can gain social status with their peers by "interacting" with the students from abroad, even if the students from abroad send very little writing. In these interactive classrooms, students gain peer status (and their writing develops) when they write in ways that allow them to be "recognized" by students in the other country. Further, student writing progresses most when teachers understand and make room for diverse students with diverse needs and when they help students gain conscious control over what will and will not please their distant audience. In these classrooms students are challenged to connect their personal experiences and socio-cultural concerns with increasingly serious and challenging academic writing. The exchange either is well integrated with or replaces the regular writing curriculum, with literacy activities centering around the exchange and designed to meet the multiple dimensions of students' lives. In other classes, when the potential of the exchange is only partially realized, we find that emphasis on making personal connections comes at the expense of academic writing and/or that an emphasis on academic writing pays too little attention to personal and then broadly social concerns. In these classes, these different emphases may vary from one writing task to the next. In these classes the exchange is not an integral part of the social and intellectual fabric of classroom life. Rather it is added to, not integrated with, the regular curriculum. Across a pair of classes exchanging writing, it is possible for the exchange to be well-integrated into the social and academic lives of the students in one classroom but to be added to the curriculum of the other. These tensions between the social and the academic play themselves out in various ways in the eight classrooms in this study.

In the case of Judy Logan and Kate Chapman, both teachers work hard to integrate the exchange writing into their students' social and academic lives. They felt that during their first year exchanges they paid too little attention to the social side, something they work to rectify in this second year. As a first step, they pair students on each side of the Atlantic as response partners. These partners write personal letters and establish a personal relationship and then respond to one another's writing. Most of Judy's students feel that through this pairing they make friends with Kate's students. At the end of the year, many expect to meet and visit their exchange partners, just as Kate and Judy meet and visit one another. For Belle, who has difficulty making friends in her own school, the British "friends" she acquires through the international mails help her establish relationships with her more immediate peer group in the United States. In Belle's case, the exchange serves a vital personal and social function as it teaches her peers an important lesson, that students' social roles with their peers can change.

Taking advantage of the mutual trust the students build through their letters and through their early autobiographical writing, Judy and Kate help them assume the academic responsibility of responding to their partner's writing and then of taking on increasingly serious topics for writing, topics that will help students participate in the social and intellectual worlds of their communities. This kind of social participation becomes entwined with intellectual activity as students use language, including their writing, to reflect on their worlds and to find a social place for themselves within the culture of the classroom and the community at large. Judy's students provide good examples of how these youngsters take on increasingly important social and intellectual challenges, as they move from mostly personal to personally based but issue-focussed writing. Elizabeth's award-winning essay for NOW models how a sixth-grader (Form 1) can write both issue-focused and personally meaningful prose. Similarly, Christine's Rosa Parks monologue brings history alive on both sides of the Atlantic. As Judy's students use oral language and drama to help them enhance, prepare, and model their literate efforts for one another, they draw together as a socially conscious, academic community. Throughout Judy encourages her students to write in ways that connect their chosen topics to their own interests and to the interests of other students their age, in their class and in Kate's. Across the course of the year, both Judy's and Kate's students write on topics that push them to question their identities and their cultures. They use writing to share their ideas, hopes, and dreams.

Organizing and managing the pairing takes a great deal on the part of Judy and Kate. The pairing also makes their students dependent on receiving writing from the other class, something we have found to be risky in many exchanges. Kate and Judy manage this approach because they have a well-established relationship, are in close communication, and both follow through on the commitments they make to one another. Although not the case for the older students, for these youngest students in the study, their academic progress seems to be enhanced by the personal connections that the pairing helps establish.

In contrast to Judy's and Kate's harmonious exchange is the exchange between Robin's and John's classes. Robin imagines the exchange largely as a forum to stimulate personal dialogues between students; however, once the dialogues start, Robin hopes they will lead to academic gains. John never considers personal dialogue to be part of the exchange. Instead, he treats the social and academic as one, defining social not as personal dialogue but as reflection on oneself and one's community that leads to engagement with one's work. John and his students expect to learn about the United States through serious and socially conscious academic offerings from Robin's students, of the type they are themselves preparing. John's students have no idea that Robin's group is depending primarily on personal pieces to go back and forth.

Because personal dialogues never materialize and because Robin's exchange is designed to rely on them for its start, Robin faces significant problems. For Robin's class, the exchange is added to an already packed curriculum. By contrast, John places the exchange at the core of his academic agenda. He does not ignore the personal and social aspects of the exchange either. Because of the way John has defined and structured the relationship between the social and the academic, his class, although disappointed in what comes from Robin's class, is not dependent on what Robin's group sends for their own academic progress. Rather, like Judy and Kate, John is able to integrate the social and academic, but he does so on his own, without coordinating with Robin's class.

In the two exchange pairs involving the ninth-grade (Form 4) students, both British classes are distracted from the social and academic potentials of the exchange by the urgency to prepare for the GCSE examination. Neither Irene nor Sue are able to manage integrating the exchange and examiner audiences, and so the examiner audience necessarily takes priority over the exchange audience whenever the two come into conflict. Ultimately, since Irene and Sue feel the U.S. students will not be interested in the writing that goes into the examination folders, they have their students do extra writing especially for the exchange. Rather than motivate their students to do high powered and engaging writing, the exchange becomes a burden, one that is in the way of more important social goals and that also has little academic pay off.

The British students send just enough so that Susan and Joan, by making very good use of what comes from England, can establish a personal base for academic activities in their classes. Also, like John, both Susan and Joan are able to operate fairly independently after a certain point, with neither of them depending on personal dialogues or on individual pairings from their partner class. In both cases, a single set of engaging and personal letters that arrive early in the year prove sufficient for them to help their students establish feelings of personal connection that stimulate much future writing. Once Susan's and Joan's students feel comfortable with the British audience, they want to reveal themselves through their writing. They see the students in England as friends, and they work hard to develop personal voices and create writing personas so that they can present themselves appealingly. They want to be liked and respected by the British group in the same way that they want to be liked and respected by their classmates.

As the year goes on, in both classes the students are disappointed that they do not hear more often from their British counterparts. While these feelings intensify in Susan's class, Joan is able to hold them somewhat in abeyance, in part because her class receives slightly more writing than Susan's does. Joan also embeds the British audience into her classroom life as she weaves the exchange into the fabric of her tightly knit classroom community, literally creating a global community as she helps her students bring the British students into their "family." As is the case for Belle in Judy's class, a number of Joan's students find important roles for their new British friends, roles their U.S. friends cannot play. For example, far away in England, Titch becomes the subject of many romantic fantasies, allowing boys in Joan's class to flirt, without any of the risk of having to act on their flirtation.

Joan and Susan take other steps to be certain they can capitalize on this opportunity for their students to improve their literacy skills. First, they use the writing that comes from England in important and academically powerful ways. They spend a substantial amount of time helping their students read and appreciate what arrives. During the reading, they help them connect the writers' concerns with their own. Joan also helps her students use those connections to reflect on their own writing. The British students serve as both audience and model. Susan is discontent at the end of the year that her students still have difficulty reflecting on their writing and their progress, but given her help, the help of the Write Team, and talk that goes on in the table groups, they are beginning to acquire a language for describing some of what they need to do to improve their writing, even though many of them still may not fully understand the meaning of that language or how to actually improve what they have written.

Joan's and Susan's students fit the profiles of students most at risk of school failure; they come in disproportionate numbers from underrepresented groups that have been described as resistant to school (e.g., Giroux, 1983; Ogbu, 1990). Joan and Susan work to stimulate literacy activities that will have status for the peer group, the result being that in the context of their classrooms very few students resist school or learning. Susan, for example, describes how her students voluntarily come in after school on rally day to finish their writing to England. Given the high numbers of at-risk students in these classes, Susan's and Joan's only hope of meeting their students' academic needs resides in their effectiveness in simultaneously meeting the students' social and academic needs.

Across the eight classrooms in this study, we see young adolescents become engaged by school writing, especially when writing is valued not just by the teacher and the school but also by the peer group. Writing begins with personal connections and with peer group/social connections, connections that ultimately thread deep into the fabric of social commitment. This kind of social embedding for the exchange is critical as a base for important academic activities. When students are completely engaged in their writing, the writing functions in classrooms in ways that help students gain status with their peer groups. For some students, like Judy's, doing well in school and writing well is consistent with peer group values; for others, school success and writing are not normally valued by the peer culture. In these cases it becomes possible to use the exchanges to give writing value.

Beyond giving writing value, the teachers in the two countries set up classrooms in which students do somewhat different kinds of writing, even in an exchange when many of the topics are planned collaboratively across national boundaries. In the first place, as John's students show, students in England write narratives that take the form of very elaborate fiction, not just personal experience narratives. This writing is a regular part of the English class, not something that is done in a separate elective creative writing class as is commonly the case in the United States at the secondary level. Only Judy's sixth-graders, who are not yet secondary age in the States, do writing close to comparable, with their spooky tales. Secondly, even in the examination classes where the exchange writing is minimal, students in England write longer pieces than students in the United States. The one notable exception comes from Judy's "gifted" class. Except for the "gifted" students, whom U.S. schools serve best, the writing process in English schools is much more involved and extended than in U.S. schools.

Focus on Curricular Activities versus Individual Students: Negotiated Teaching, Student Development, and Issues of Control

National surveys reveal that successful teachers of writing in the United States most often attribute their success to their curriculum, which is their repertoire of successful topics and assignments for that class and their "process approach"; British teachers are more likely to attribute their success to getting to know their students as developing writers (Freedman & McLeod, 1988b). Although this curricular orientation in the United States and developmental orientation in Great Britain permeate teaching and learning in the two countries, the exchange teachers show that the situation is really quite complex. They often attend both to student development and to their curriculum and reveal that these orientations are not mutually exclusive, but instead indicate differences in emphasis. Also, they illustrate that the orientations do not coincide strictly with national boundaries. Particular U.S. teachers seem to focus as much attention on student development as some of their British counterparts. However, because the British educational system is organized to support teachers' emphases on development while the U.S. system is not, U.S. teachers may run into difficulties when they adopt a developmental orientation.[3] Perhaps for this reason, U.S. developmental orientations differ from British developmental orientations, and they also take on different forms and meanings in different U.S. classrooms. In both countries, teachers seem to shape their notions of development to fit their particular philosophies and educational contexts.

In the rest of this section we focus on four classrooms in the exchange study, John Hickman's and Kate Chapman's in England and Joan Cone's and Susan Reed's in the United States. These two U.K. the classrooms do not present the complications of examination classes, while the two U.S. groups allow a close look at the two lowest-track groups , groups in which the teachers offer interesting contrasts as they struggle to implement a developmental approach. These four teachers also meld students' personal, social, and academic needs as they fully integrate the exchange into their teaching. John, Kate, Joan, and Susan each articulate and demonstrate clearly some aspect of how developmental theory finds its way into practice, stimulating a new look at the theory itself.

John and Kate have relatively similar views about student development and how to account for it in their teaching. Their views are also consistent with those espoused in current pedagogical writings in Britain (e.g., *The English Curriculum: Writing*). Both teachers explain how they meet their students' needs as developing writers through a complex process of "negotiation" in which they and the students contribute to decisions about what activities the students will take part in and how they will learn. Like Sue and Irene, Kate and John organize their classes like workshops. Students sit in table groups with their friends (see Figures 3.2, 4.2, 5.2, and 6.2). They frequently write in class, asking for help as they feel the need—from their tablemates, from other students in the class, from their teacher, and from any other adult who might be present. There is more student talk than teacher talk, with the teacher conducting whole-class discussions only to frame the lesson, generally at the start and the end of class, and occasionally for other specific purposes. Most often the teachers participate in discussions with small table groups or with individuals. All four British teachers point out that since diverse students of mixed abilities meet in the same classroom, teaching must be organized to meet the needs of different students and groups of students engaging in different activities.

From the U.S. point of view, these British classrooms seem "learner centered" and "individualized," approaches that have been highly valued in popular U.S. pedagogical writings over the past decade (e.g., Atwell, 1987; Calkins, 1983, 1986; Graves, 1983). However, the British team is quick to argue that their classrooms are not really "learner centered" or "individualized" in the usual sense of the these terms. John notes that this British sense of negotiated teaching in the 1980s and 90s "has a slightly harder edge" as it aims to provide "a frame in which personal growth can take place." John's current focus defines "personal growth" as necessarily reaching beyond "personal creativity" (Interview, October 30, 1990). Although the

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[3] For more detail on how the educational systems are organized to support these different orientations, see the earlier section in this chapter entitled "Getting to Know Students: School and Curricular Organization."

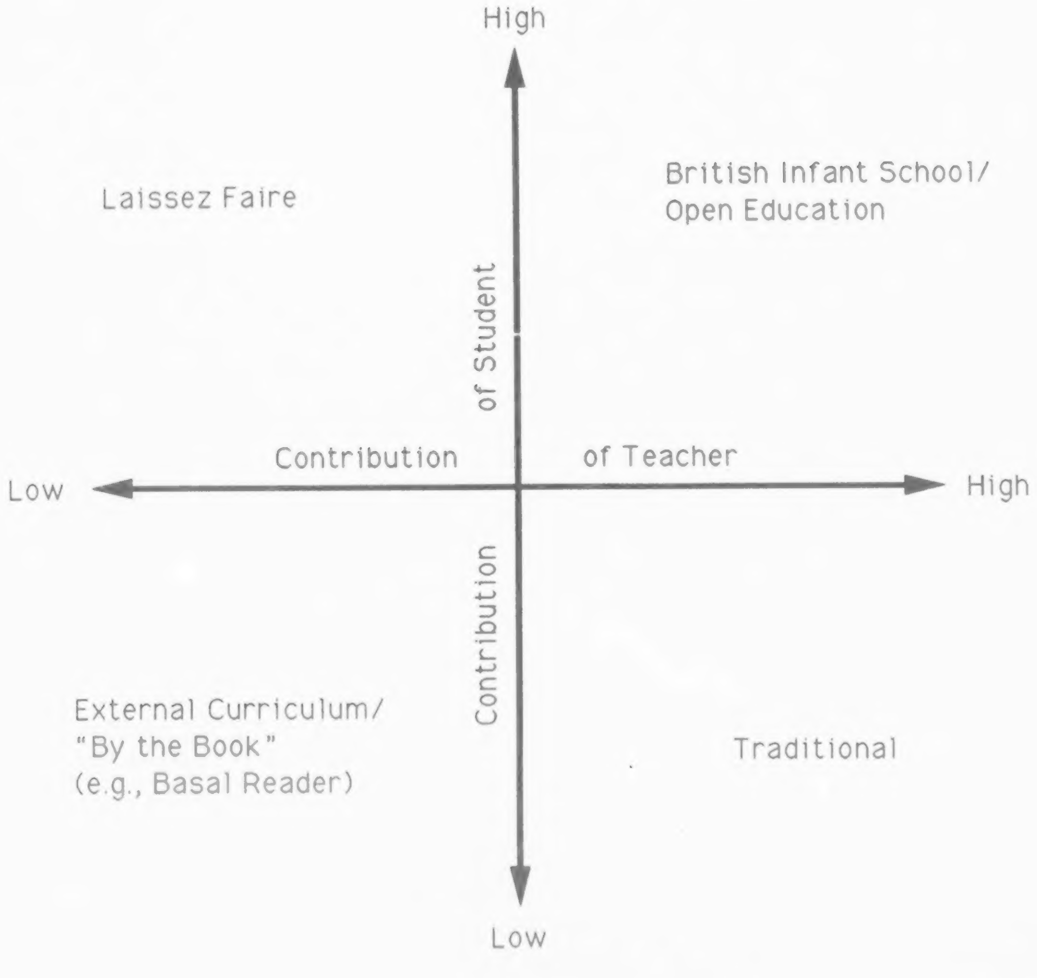
British teachers strive to account for the interests and needs of individual students and groups of students, they do not favor complete individualization, which they find both impractical and undesirable. In fact, they argue that too much individualization devalues the role of the classroom culture and in particular the way discussions, activities, and frequently writing arise out of the interaction of students with each other and with their teacher. The British teachers rely on theories of learning that pay substantial attention to the processes by which experience becomes part of the learners' usable knowledge of the world and how society works (see Barnes, 1976; Britton, 1970, drawing on Vygotsky, 1962, and Kelly, 1955). These theories propose that while learning is individual, it is also essentially social and cultural.

The implications for classrooms are that students are seen not just as individuals but importantly as members of varied social groups—including the classroom community, which is also part of a school, and a town, and a district—all with characteristic interactions of cultural and social processes (Hardcastle, 1985). Besides writing about personal experiences, families and family occasions, and family problems, students talk, formally and informally, about their community experience and its history. This talk forms much of the substance for helping students move beyond personal experience to consider serious critical issues. Much of their writing may arise from these interactions. John and Kate argue that it is crucial for teachers to promote small-group and less often whole-class social interactions that are keyed to the needs of the particular students in the class but that also are the base for shared group experiences that lead to a strong, close-knit, and intellectually questioning community of learners. They maintain that it is just as inappropriate for every student always to be doing and thinking about something different, with no shared group experiences, as it is for all students to do the same thing in a lock-step fashion.

In these classrooms, the teacher and students also share control in very particular ways, with both the teacher and the students exerting high levels of control. To John "learner centered" harkens back to the 1960s when "personal creativity" was the focus and when it was thought that teachers only had to give individual children opportunities to learn and they would do so. In these negotiated classrooms of the 1990s, the teacher does not relinquish control to the students but rather sets up a learning environment in which the students also assume control. This sharing of control is similar to Bussis and Chittenden's (1970) description of what happens in "open" classrooms modelled after the British Infant School. In a distinction that remains useful, Bussis and Chittenden point out that "child-centeredness and adult-centeredness might be viewed as independent dimensions in the classroom rather than as opposite ends of a single scale" (p. 22). On Figure 7.1, adapted from their original, they oppose a high teacher-control/high student-control classroom to a low teacher-control/high student-control laissez-faire model in which the teacher hands control over to the student; to a high teacher-control/low student-control traditional classroom in which the teacher maintains all power, allowing little room for the student; to a low teacher-control/low student-control classroom dominated by external curriculum materials (e.g., a basal reading series with accompanying teacher manual and materials), in which neither student nor teacher take any control over what students learn. Berlack and Berlack (1981) elaborate on the dilemmas posed by issues of autonomy and control inside classrooms, describing multiple dimensions of learner control and the processes of obtaining it.

As John explains it, some domains are within his appropriate control and others within the learners'. John exerts his control through setting "contexts" for learning that will motivate students to use language, including writing, in a wide variety of ways. According to Richmond in the introduction to *The English Curriculum: Writing*, which assumes this kind of "negotiated curriculum" and which is currently a popular collection of writings by British educators, "Contexts are sets of circumstances which produce the intention to write" (p. 10). John explains that "the context could be a book or a movie that we share together" or "something like writing a book for a younger audience." Any plans that the teacher makes for the whole group, like writing autobiography or stories, provide scope for individual students to find topics that really interest them and approaches that they can manage and that challenge them.

Classroom Contributors


High
Laissez Faire
British Infant School/
Open Education
of Student
Contribution
of Teacher
Low
High
Contribution
External Curriculum/
"By the Book"
(e.g., Basal Reader)
Traditional
Low

Adapted from: Bussis and Chittenden, 1970, *Analysis of an Approach to Open Education* (Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service), p. 23.

Within the contexts teachers set, students are encouraged to exert control over their learning. Teachers spend a generous amount of time talking to students about what they might choose to write. If something especially interesting to the students comes up, the teacher often takes the opportunity to extend that topic or area, giving it extra time and encouraging it to grow, possibly giving up something already planned to help that area of interest develop. Through these contexts the teacher pushes students to raise difficult critical and imaginative questions, which will take the students into a world where everything is not always secure and comfortable.

John provides a number of contexts for writing that show how students' thinking emerges from critical issues within their community life. For example, in October 1987, when most of John's students were writing their autobiographical pieces, Southern England suffered the most severe storm for more than a hundred years. It began about one a.m. and was all the more alarming because it had not been forecast. John's students, as soon as school reopened on the following Monday, immediately set about relating their experiences for their U.S. audience. Some also sent newspaper reports and photographs:

> South East England woke up Friday morning to disaster, trees fallen everywhere, tiles and chimneys blown off and smashed, and hardly any electric power. Even now, nearly a week after, Southern England still looks devastated! My garden has been totally demolished; our tree has been blown over, and all the apples blown all over the garden. In fact even the weeds are scattered everywhere. My garden looks a total mess. (Nikita)

> When I got into the front room my mum told me to look out the window. I quickly looked and to my amazement I saw that one of the four trees had fallen right on top of the car. I could feel wind going right up my ears coming right through the window. (Barnes)

A few weeks later a fire in a major London Underground Station caused thirty deaths. Helen collected press clippings and added her own commentary, next to a photograph of a burnt out escalator.

> Fire fighter Colin Townsley, a brave hero, lost his life in the Kings Cross tube inferno trying to save others. He left behind his two children, Sarah 18 and Sally 11, and his wife Linda.

One of England's most popular soap operas is *Eastenders*. It is set in an east London community quite similar to Forest Gate where John's students live. On hearing that the series was being shown in the United States, several students wrote about characters and events in the drama.

In John's negotiated program, these contributions to the exchange were proposed by the students. Towards the end of the year John himself introduced a different but equally topical proposal, a study of the Docklands as part of the community booklet the students were preparing. A few miles south of the school is the part of the River Thames which used to be Britain's busiest port. Almost all cargo handling has now moved to Tilbury, thirty miles down river. The Docklands has become an enterprise zone, attracting massive public and private investment in commercial building, luxury housing, leisure activities and transport—including a new airport and commuter railway. John organized a whole day visit for his class. In their reports they selected what they found most interesting about a development which will probably affect their lives, and certainly raises questions about their employment prospects. Here is a selection:

> The docks began to close in the mid-sixties because faster, cheaper and safer ways had been found to transport the goods. the workers in the docks at this time (25 -30,000 of them) were made jobless. (Delbert)

> Two years ago you could have bought a house for 27,000 pounds. Now you would have to pay 110.000 pounds. (Bonet)
>
> Development was everywhere. Docklands has become the hottest property in London. (Bruno)
>
> The Docklands Corporation is planning to build a skyscraper in the docks. It will be the tallest building in London. (Drago)
>
> A city airport, which took three years to build and cost 38 million pounds . . . It takes Canadian Dash 7 planes which are STOL—short take off and landing. (Amelio)

These motivating contexts are very different from favorite curricular activities that teachers use from year to year. John found this emphasis on curricular activities central during his time at the Bay Area Writing Project. He was surprised by the U.S. teachers' presentations to one another about successful instructional activities: "They all seemed to be program models as to, you know, how you take it from me and you can go use it in your classroom . . . I couldn't do that because I don't offer a program" (Interview, October 30, 1990). In fact, although what John does is very different from Atwell, Calkins, and Graves's, individualized classrooms that rely on students making individual choices about writing, like them, he does offer an alternative to set curricular activities. Where John differs is that he might choose a book or issue to discuss, or within parameters he sets, the group might decide on a book or issue. The point is that for John, who the students are determines what is selected,. and the students work with him to decide how they might approach studying a book or dealing with an issue and the kind of writing and other language activities they might do. In this way, both teacher and student exert control and direct the learning process. In fact, John finds it pointless even to keep records of teaching activities since new students play such a major part in shaping what the activities will be and how they will unfold.

John feels that most U.S. teachers he has come in contact with plan their classrooms around the unit of an idealized whole group, say a generic group of eighth graders in a particular track at a particular school. The result is that U.S. teachers plan group activities that they anticipate everyone will need and like. As John says, "If you [in the U.S.] are focusing on a particular area or a particular type of writing, you seem to make all the kids do that type of writing at the same time" (Interview, October 30, 1990). John understands that U.S. teachers, within this frame, may allow some variety to meet individual needs but basically they are likely to repeat whole sets of activities they find successful one year with students in the next year. John does not see how a fixed program aimed at an idealized whole group, or even a program with some individual variation built in, can be sufficient to meet the varying and evolving needs of a particular group of students. He negotiates between his plans and the desires and needs of his students, as often following their lead as his own. He concludes that when U.S. teachers plan ahead for whole groups, they do not seem to have a notion of student diversity firmly embedded in their ideas about teaching. Both Kate and John explain that their entire curriculum is not negotiated. As John says, "There are certain areas of negotiation." Still, whenever he has encountered negotiation in the U.S., John has found that it "goes on in much narrower parameters" than in Great Britain. Kate comments that this kind of wide-banded British negotiated teaching is "more messy" than the narrower bands of negotiation fostered in many classrooms in the States.

Important to John's and Kate's notions of negotiated teaching is the fact that they keep the same students for more than one year. They think about motivation and student development across long stretches of time. John explains that he relies on a spiral curriculum, using the types of writing on the GCSE as a guide for the kinds of writing he will want his students to experience, for the kinds for which he will attempt to set motivating contexts. Having the same class for five years gives John a great deal of flexibility. He does not worry if, at a given point in time, a student does not want to do a particular type of writing or even to write at all, even though he thinks the student needs to practice that particular type of writing and even though he has set a context to motivate that writing. He simply allows the student to do a language activity that the student is more interested in. Later on he will try again to set another context which will motivate the student. John takes it as his responsibility to set this motivating context and keep track of the activities the varied students engage in successfully across time.

Dixon and Stratta in *The English Curriculum: Writing* explain how students in the same class "at different staging points in their development as writers of argument" are accommodated:

> For some pupils, an extended written narrative may be demanding enough. However, one step into a more generalised perspective can be made by suggesting that some of them could try to sum up what they have learnt from thinking through their own story and those of their friends. At some point there will be pupils who can turn that 'summing up' into a new kind of exploratory writing that we want to call a 'ruminative essay'. . . . The movement from unique individual experiences to a sort of map that gives some kind of overview, placing them in relationship to each other and offering the opportunity for reflective insight seems to us a fundamental part of education. What's more, as pupils begin to disagree over the interpretation of 'problems' such as some Asian girls face, or actions needed to resolve them—a dauntingly complex issue—argument with some value for the pupils will almost inevitably arise. (pp. 70-71)

In negotiated teaching, the teacher helps the student find a match between his or her needs and interests and the broader instructional goals embedded in the context the teacher sets. While some students write a narrative, others might write a summary, others a ruminative essay, and still others an argument; some might share a topical focus while others might choose different topics.

As these British teachers set up negotiated classrooms, they caution that teachers must help students assume high degrees of control over their learning and that students take some time to learn to take control. Kate explains how she gradually helps her students assume control, much as Vygotsky (1978) describes in his theories of language, learning, and thinking. Instead of focussing separately on either the teacher or the learners, Vygotsky compels us to focus on the interaction. We then observe that there is a marked difference between what students can do, independently and unaided, and what they can begin to do in collaboration with teachers and fellow students who have more experience of the topic, idea, or matter at hand. Vygotsky explains that when students can accomplish tasks with help but not alone, they are working within their "zone of proximal development" (1978, p. 86). The importance for us lies in the role assigned to teachers as negotiators, with students who are active participants in a joint enterprise—the making of meaning. Students assume control through this process of negotiation or through social interaction between teacher and learner and among learners, following Vygotsky's notion of social interaction that leads to learning. For Kate, the assuming of control is a long-term developmental goal she holds for her students.

In the United States, beginning in the exchange year but particularly reflected in their teacher research projects the year following the exchange, Joan and Susan have moved in directions much like those that John and Kate have articulated. However, Joan and Susan have explored somewhat different paths. We look first at Joan's views about student development and negotiated teaching, which are similar to those described by John and Kate. We next look at Susan's explorations which, by contrast, have followed current U.S. pedagogical writings that stress individualized instruction (in particular Atwell [1987]), and we follow Susan as she faces a number of interesting dilemmas as Atwell's writings and her own practice converge with and diverge from the British ideas just described.

Like John and Kate, Joan organizes her classroom to emphasize community rather than individualization; to promote high levels of teacher and student control, with students assuming increased levels of control across time; and to foster motivating contexts for writing. Although not arranged in tables, Joan's classroom is ringed with computers, where students cluster in groups and often help one another, much as the British students do at their table groups. Joan supports this student helpfulness by building a community where diversity and individual variation can flourish. Joan's student, Easy E., gives a sense of the kind of community she creates. He describes the class as "our little family." It is a place where "teasing" is not allowed, where students "work together, and . . . share all types of things," where "when something was wrong, like she would come to me and ask me to help and . . . I was happy for her to come to me, and ask me to help somebody." In this family-like atmosphere, Joan plays a mother-like role: "Everybody's her kid. . . It's like she's your mother. . . . She really pressures you because she wants you to do good." Because of Joan's caring, Easy E. says that "everybody cooperated" and the students got close to one another. He claims, "I never been that close with many of my friends like I have now . . . It's just like, some of them are my brothers" (Interview, March 21, 1988). The point is not so much that Joan plays the role of mother but rather that she uses her resources to build a close relationship out of trust, openness, and above all, a willingness for teacher and student to accept one another as they are (see also Kohl, 1967; Rose, 1989 for descriptions of other approaches to building this kind of close classroom relationship). Because she is caring, Joan is in a position to be demanding and to have those demands accepted in a way that would not be possible for teachers who place restrictions on their personal involvement with their students. She builds a classroom community both through her interactions with her students and the tone she sets for appropriate student interactions.

Since the exchange year, Joan has continued to refine her notions of negotiated teaching. As part of her classroom research on her twelfth-grade, Advanced Placement (AP), English class, Joan has written about her current ideas, particularly surrounding the sharing of control with students (Cone, 1990). When she opened this AP class to any student willing to do the work, she faced an urgent situation that demanded that she make swift and major changes to accommodate the mixture of abilities in her classroom. As in the United Kingdom, the shift toward mixed ability necessitated changes in classroom organization. As Joan writes, "Creating opportunity was not enough—I had to learn how to teach an untracked class" (Cone, p. 2, 1990). She explains what she learned:

> These major changes involved collaborating with my students and sharing responsibility with them.
>
> . . . .
>
> This collaborative atmosphere invited students to move from reflecting on and evaluating class dynamics and tasks to assuming ownership of the curriculum. . . . Once it was clear that I was willing to share responsibility for the class with them, they began to negotiate many things with me—due dates, numbers of revision drafts, film selections, book discussion formats. The most exciting area of shared responsibility was the choosing of their literature. From their first discussion of which book they would buy and read, it was clear they knew what was class literary fare and what was outside reading and that, as the teacher, I had the final say. But it was also clear that I trusted them to select challenging books and they did. Among the books they chose: *Iron and Silk, Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant, Of Love and Shadow, and The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. I most vividly remember the day Venus said she wanted to read *Room of One's Own*. There we were with three weeks left in the school year, the AP test over, the senior ditch day and prom only days away. It was time to relax and Venus was asking us to read Virginia Woolf. They'll never go for this, I thought. But they did—they read it, groused about its unfamiliar allusions and serious tone, but discussed it with real passion and insight. And

> they led me to see the brilliance of it—something I had resisted for years, after struggling with it on my own as a college junior and swearing I would never subject my students to it. (pp. 4-5)
>
> . . . .
>
> Opening up AP English to all students willing to commit to a challenging curriculum led me to another discovery. If I wanted to effect change in my students, I had to move away from the front of the classroom, I had to share responsibility for teaching and learning with them, and I had to give my students real choices about their education. (p. 6)

Joan continues to move away from the front of the classroom. Although she has her classes for only one year, she releases control gradually. She focuses explicitly on community-building as the vehicle for promoting individual growth and for negotiating with her students writing contexts that will expand their horizons and that will be motivating. To this end, the group, not individuals, choose a book, which everyone then discusses. In essence, Joan meets the needs of individual students, but still sets group contexts and maintains group processes.

Equally as concerned with student development as Joan, Susan explores a different route. During the exchange year, she works to build a community of learners, with her students sitting in small table groups similar to those in the British classrooms. Her students have time to work together, to help one another, and to do much of their writing and revising in class. However, at the end of the year, Susan feels that she has not been able to learn enough about or fully meet her students' individual needs as writers. At this point, she makes special arrangements to keep the exchange class for another year, thus radically changing the context in which she works with her students and creating a context which is uncommon for U.S. teachers. At the same time, she decides to experiment with a more individualized and more student-controlled approach, following Nancie Atwell's ideas in *In the Middle* (1987). Just as *The English Curriculum: Writing* offers an official version of British negotiated teaching, Atwell offers a popular and award-winning U.S. version, one that many U.S. teachers, like Susan, are adapting to their classrooms.[4]

As was the case with Joan, although we were no longer collecting data during this second year, Susan's own research focused on how she uses these new structures to meet her students' needs as developing writers. As Susan adapts Atwell's pedagogical suggestions, her basic goals remain similar to her first-year goals and to those of Joan and the British teachers, to help students grow as writers in a supportive and motivating classroom environment. However, Atwell's "writing workshop" approach has a number of unique qualities. First, Atwell concentrates on building classroom organizations that promote complete individualization of instruction. She stresses the importance of giving her students "responsibility and autonomy" (p. 18), with complete freedom as writers to choose their topics, the kinds of writing they will do, and when they will do it. In the process, she pays only minimal attention to building a community of learners within the classroom and to exploring wider community issues with her students. This is not to say that Atwell does not successfully build community but just that she does not highlight this as a major philosophical goal.

The U.K. team finds it unlikely that many British teachers of eighth grade (third Form) students would operate a program of individual choice and control the way Atwell does. They would be more likely to negotiate topic decisions with their students, as equal partners. The group might decide on common topics or on collaborative projects to which a number of students would contribute. For example, on the issue of topic choice, unlike Atwell who provides students with complete freedom, John sees it as his responsibility to motivate each student to master a variety of types of writing. He does not assign topics or urge students to write on topics which do not interest them, but rather he sees it as an important part of his job to interest his students in taking on new challenges. He is not confident that students, without his stimulus, necessarily would push themselves to take on such challenges. John also takes responsibility for seeing that all students master at least those types of writing on the GCSE examinations. He is not rigid about when students do what kinds of writing, exploiting the notion of a spiral curriculum, with students at varied ages cycling through varied types of writing. Such spiraling is possible for John and other British teachers since they keep their classes for more than one year. Although Atwell values variety and explains that her class creates varied kinds of writing, she seems content to let individuals who are not exploring varied forms stick with those they find comfortable.

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[4] For *In the Middle*, Atwell won the National Council of Teachers of English 1990 David H. Russell award for Distinguished Research in the Teaching of English. She was the first practicing classroom teacher to win this most prestigious of NCTE's research awards.

Since Susan does not use Atwell's approach until her second year with her students, she has already built a learning community and provided important intellectual structures in her first year with her class. Susan does not release control as abruptly as Atwell does, making a gradual transition to more and more negotiation, something she is able to do with her group over the two years she has them, much as Kate describes a gradual sharing of control with her students. Susan is still in the process of defining how the theoretical frame that guides her teaching does and does not overlap with Atwell's. She now has moved to a new school where she only has her classes for one year. In this new context she finds applying Atwell's ideas much more difficult since she has little time to get to know her students and to build a trusting learning community before handing over the decision-making process for writing topics. All in all, although Susan is happy to give her students full topic choice, she is finding that Atwell pays too little explicit attention to the importance of community building and to the gradual release of control to students.

These points of tension raise interesting questions about the theories that underlie Atwell's approach to development and that underlie the approach articulated in *The English Curriculum: Writing*. Clearly, behind *The English Curriculum: Writing* and behind much current pedagogical writing about the teaching of writing in the U.S., including Atwell's, are Vygotsky's theories which emphasize the processes by which experience becomes part of the learners' usable knowledge of the world and how society works. Those processes acknowledge that while learning is individual, it is also essentially social and cultural, with students learning through talk and social interaction, and with that talk, to be effective, taking students into new areas of experience beyond what they can manage on their own. What is at issue are the specific implications of Vygotsky's ideas for classroom practice. Like others who are currently at the forefront in writing about writing pedagogy in the U.S. (e.g., Calkins, 1983, 1986; Graves, 1983), Atwell describes social interactions as students talk to each other, write to each other, and respond thoughtfully and sensitively to one another's writing (see also Freedman, 1987). However, beyond discussing ideas for topics and techniques of writing, Atwell does not explain how these interactions push students to reach new planes of knowledge. Just as she emphasizes the individual aspects of learning, she also proposes that teachers need only give children opportunities to learn, allowing them independence which will challenge them to grow. Here she comes into conflict with both British and U.S. theorists who push the implications of Vygotsky's work further. Such theorists go on to emphasize whole-group discussions, that would occur relatively infrequently by U.S. standards, and more often small-group discussions that would be especially designed to stimulate students' ideas, to challenge their thinking, and to motivate their writing. These discussions build on social and cultural factors in learning, both at the micro-level of the classroom and the group, and at the macro-level of the community and the nation. For a description of such a whole-group discussion see Hardcastle, 1985, and McLeod, 1986.

In the end, Atwell's students write in compelling ways about their personal experiences. However, the British research team is critical because only certain kinds of experiences get onto the writing agenda. Her students write a great deal about families—family occasions, and even some family problems—but hardly anything about what makes living in Boothbay Harbor in any way different from say, Atkinson, New Hampshire, or almost any other small town. There is a small move towards writing about a community experience in the report by one of two boys who stayed out of school on Valentine's Day to sell flowers (pp. 100-103), but Atwell seems content with her students' choosing relatively safe topics, her priority being that the students are committed to what they are writing. Although she writes relatively little about the process through which students choose their topics, the section, "Questions for a topic conference" (p. 99), gives some insight into how topic choice probably happens in Atwell's class, especially in the early stages. The list is dominated by family, friends, leisure time, and very personal experiences. The final questions, which might encourage a move into less safe, comfortable topics are noted as having been supplied by Donald Murray: "What have you read/heard/seen/felt that you can't forget? What would you like to know? What problems need solving? Who might have solutions to those problems?" (p. 100). Murray's questions are least taken up by Atwell's students. "What problems need solving?" is represented by a letter to the school board about the prohibition of motor-cycles at school, something that was a very urgent question to that writer, but the selection of that student's contribution makes us ask whether these students count as "problems" only those things that affect them personally. Our experiences with the exchanges show that sixth-through ninth-graders often have kinds of questions that are not represented here at all. It is these kinds of student questions that the exchanges aimed to push students to write about.

We conclude this section with a question: What does freedom to choose topics imply? Freedom is still a very slippery concept. A teacher may be offering her students everything in the world, but the choices they make are bound to be influenced by the ways those students interact with each other, and even more by the ways they interact with their teacher. Atwell writes very well, and cares about good writing; she reads widely, and, importantly, she has an excellent knowledge of recent fiction for young people. Her students show that same commitment to writing and literature, and it seems ungrateful to complain that this is not enough. Shouldn't we ask also, though, that she should raise critical, imaginative questions, ones that will take her students a little further into a world where everything is not nearly so secure and comfortable as most of their writing—and indeed most of their reading—suggests? Medway (1986) points out:

> There is no need for pupils in English to be just writing writing: let them write SOMETHING, and let that something result in cognitive gains which might make a difference to them. Could we not begin by asking: What do pupils NEED to address themselves to? What are the bits of the world, the aspects of reality and experience which could do with receiving that intense working over which only writing can give? Starting from there, we might get both a less trivial curriculum AND enhanced writing performance. (p. 39)

Is it enough to encourage writing only on individual, personal, comfortable themes, so long as, according to Atwell, the writing itself is rated at the 99th percentile? (p. 259).

Final Remarks

Even though the classrooms in this study raise a number of provocative questions about teaching and learning, about the intersections between our theories and our practices, we want to conclude by emphasizing the fact that we found a great deal to admire in all of them. We found first that the institutional structures in which teachers teach exert powerful influences over what teachers can do inside classrooms. These include: the professional trajectory for the classroom teacher which influences the role the teacher can play in influencing the larger school environment, the relationship between the school and the communities in which the students live, school size, class size, the amount of time teachers work with the same group of students, tracking policies, and the effects of a high-stake examination system that is tied directly to the curriculum. In the end, the British contexts help teachers get to know their students and watch them develop across time. These contexts also support teachers working with students across long stretches of time on projects that lead to extended writing of a kind that is unusual in the United States—as is indicated by the longer pieces of writing sent by British as compared to U.S. students.

Within their contexts, the teachers in this study have taught us the importance of being responsible for melding the personal, social, and academic needs of the diverse groups of students they meet, being flexible enough to allow for varied student interests and varied ways of becoming writers. The diverse populations of learners in the exchange classrooms have led us to broaden the ways we look at how young people learn and how teachers might teach them.

These teachers have also taught us that to increase students' motivation to write, students and teachers will have to plan the curriculum jointly, negotiating the kinds of writing varied students will do. Students must assume their responsibilities gradually while teachers must assume responsibility for setting contexts that motivate their students to write for a variety of audiences and in a variety of ways. As teachers work in these negotiated settings, they must attend to their individual students needs while promoting activities that build a community of learners.

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Appendix 1

The Examination System in the United Kingdom—1988

The General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) is a new examination for all students at 16+. It has replaced the system by which more able students, the top 20-25%, were entered for the General Certificate of Education Ordinary Level (O level) and others took the Certificate of Secondary Education (CSE). The first results of the GCSE were announced in August, 1988. There is a two year program of study on which the whole examination is based.

The specifications for the GCSE differ slightly according to the five different examining boards in England and Wales. Irene Robertson's school (Chapter 5) has selected to go by the specifications set by the Northern Examining Association (NEA), and Sue Llewellyn's (Chapter 6) has selected the London and East Anglian Examination Group (LEAG). For the GCSE examination, schools have a choice of examination syllabus, i.e. format and organization for the examination as well as the course of study. For English teachers, the most important choice is between either a timed examination at the end of the two years plus a folder of coursework (portfolio) or simply a folder of coursework. Both Irene's and Sue's schools had chosen the 100% coursework option. For this option, the assessment of the writing in the coursework folder is made first by the class teacher, then by a committee of teachers in the school, and finally is checked and standardized nationally.

The national standard setting for folder marking is done differently by the different examining boards. For the LEAG examining group, the school assessors meet with assessors from four or five other schools in the area, to standardize their evaluations and to check folders evaluated at the school site. Then the folders from all LEAG schools go to the National Review Panel for the examining board to ensure uniform standards throughout the country for that board. In the case of LEAG, within each area, two sections, each containing five pieces, receive a mark; if there is a disparity between the marks for the two sections, the grades for each section are averaged.

For the NEA, teachers meet twice a year for English language and twice a year for literature for trial marking sessions where they receive photocopies of scripts entered by four students the previous year. The scripts do not have grades, so the teachers decide the grade they would give if the candidate was their student. The teachers submit their grades at a school meeting where the scripts are discussed and a school grade agreed upon. Representatives from each school attend a consortium trial marking meeting where scripts and grades are discussed again. A member of the NEA's National Review Board attends this meeting and explains the grades the Board has given. After this training period the classroom teacher gives the coursework folders grades and then a committee of teachers in the school agrees on grades for the folders from that school (at least two teachers from the committee have to agree on the grade). The folders next are sent to a review panel where they seek to confirm the school grades. The final grade, which has been checked and standardized nationally, is then sent back to the school.

For the folders, students must complete 20 pieces of writing, ten of these for the English language examination and ten for the literature examination, the two examinations being separately assessed and separately certificated; there is also a separate mark for oral language, assessed as part of the ongoing language work. The 20 pieces of writing in the folders must be in a variety of functions, for a variety of purposes, and for different audiences (e.g., report, description, argument, and persuasion, narrative fiction, poems, response to texts), assembled over the whole two years, on which the students' grades are totally based. Of the ten pieces for each examination, the student and teacher choose the five best pieces which cover the assessment objectives for each examination. These are the pieces which are finally evaluated. Some students are entered for only one of the two examinations.

The important point is that the students' examination grades for language and then for literature are based on an evaluation for the set of pieces in that area in the folder. The portfolio evaluation consists of a grade given for a group of pieces and is not derived from an average of grades on individual pieces. All assessors, including the National Review Panel, are practicing teachers. (Although not doing the exchange with examination classes, Kate Chapman [Chapter 3] and John Hickman [Chapter 4] are both on the National Review Panel for the English literature examination for the NEA.)

Beginning in 1989 a system of dual certification was introduced because there was a feeling that language and literature were not completely separable subjects. Dual certification means that students could enter some pieces of writing for both language and literature. Beginning in 1990 the amount of required writing for the folders in language and literature was reduced because students were overloaded with required writing for their GCSE courses across the whole curriculum. The 1990 requirements, then, only ask for seven to ten pieces of writing which have to meet similar criteria as before. If students want to be entered for English language only, they enter five pieces. The same is true for students who enter for literature only.

British students must take the GCSE in order to receive the equivalent of a U.S. high school diploma; if they receive high scores, they may go into a two-year A level course (General Certificate of Education at Advanced Level, known as A levels). The A level courses qualify students for entry to universities and other forms of higher education. Also some employers demand A levels. Only about 20% of U.K. students take A levels; most (70%) leave school at 16+, most of these after taking the GCSE examination but a few without any examination results (Statistics of Schools, January 1988, p. 133). The 10% who stay on but not for A levels generally complete one year in the lower sixth form either to try to improve their performance in the GCSE or to complete one-year courses which have a strong vocational bias, for example the Certificate of Pre-Vocational Education. Of those who leave school at 16+ some attend Colleges of Further Education where they may take GCSEs again or vocational courses or A levels.

Appendix 2

FIRST INTERVIEW WITH THE TEACHERS

To help select focal students, teachers were asked to read through their student roll sheets and talk about each of their students, discussing each student's progress, general writing competence, and response to the exchange. We wanted to elicit the teachers' views on how their students conceptualized and then used the audience exchange, and how they grew as writers across time. The goal was to select focal students who approached writing for the exchange differently and to select enought students to represent the range of approaches in the class.

SECOND INTERVIEW WITH THE TEACHERS

Teachers were first asked to describe a current assignment. They were then asked the following questions about the assignment:

1. How did you conceive of this assignment? What made you select this assignment for the exchange? What decisions did you make as you planned it? As it was in process?
2. To what extent were your students involved in the process of selecting the assignment?
3. In thinking about the forces that helped shape this piece, to what extent was your exchange partner involved in the selection and planning/conception of this piece?
4. How did your students react to this assignment? What kinds of responses did they have?
5. Was it the kind of assignment that brought out (the best) (the worst) in your students? How so?

Teachers were then asked to concentrate on each focal student in turn and were asked the following questions:

1. How did this student react to the assignment?
2. What strategy or strategies did this student employ?
3. How did you feel about this student's efforts?

THIRD INTERVIEW WITH THE TEACHERS

Teachers were asked in the third interview to review in turn each focal student's writing portfolio for the year and to assess the student's progress. Teachers were essentially asked to comment generally on how the year went for the student and to address one question: Have you noticed any changes in this student's writing this year? What are they? What do you think caused those changes?

Where appropriate, some other questions, parallel to those asked of the students in their third interviews, were added (often, however, the teachers covered these naturally as they discussed each student):

Processes

1. Looking at this student's writing for the exchange across the year, what did the students do to complete the writing?
2. Where did the student get his or her ideas? As far as you know, who helped the student with his or her writing?

Products

1. Over the course of the entire year, what pieces of writing that this student wrote stand out most vividly in your mind? Why?
2. Which piece of this student's writing, do you think, best shows the kinds of changes you are talking about? In what ways is this piece different from the autobiography, which the student wrote very early in the year (if the teacher chooses the autobiograpy, ask the teacher to compare it to a later piece and ask why the teacher thinks what the student wrote early on was best)?
3. Are there any pieces that you do not like? Why?

FIRST INTERVIEW WITH THE STUDENTS

General Questions

Evaluating the Exchange

1. What are your impressions of the exchange so far this year? How has it been going for you?

2. How does the writing you do for the exchange compare with other writing that you do in school--either for your English teacher or for other teachers? What kinds of writing do you do in your other classes?

3 If you were arranging an exchange like this one for next year, what kinds of writing do you think the students would enjoy most? What kinds of projects would you include?

Writing Interests

1. Do you write outside of school? If so, what kinds of writing do you do?

2. What are your favorite things to write about? What do you like to write?

Exchange Audience

1. When you first learned of the exchange, what did you think the U.K. students would be like? What did you know or think about them?

2. What did you discover about them from their first writing? Did anything they wrote surprise you? If so, what?

3. When you first wrote to them, did you do anything special to connect with them? If so, what?

4. When you write to the U.K., who is the reader in your head? (e.g., yourself, your teacher, an individual U.K. student, a group of individuals, the whole U.K. class?)

Writing-Based Questions (to be asked about two pieces of writing, one at a time)

Please read this piece of your writing aloud. As you read, try to recall what you thought about and what you did as you wrote. Talk about anything that comes to your mind, stopping at any point during your reading. (If the student does not naturally cover the following questions, ask the questions after the student has completed the reading.)

Processes

1. Describe the process you used from the time your teacher first mentioned this piece until you completed it.
2. How did you choose your topic?
3. How did you get your ideas? How did you transform your ideas into writing?
4. Who did you work with? Friends? Teacher? Parents? Siblings?
5. How long did it take to write?

Product

1. How do you feel about the piece you sent to the U.K.?
2. How do you think the U.K. students would feel about the piece?
3. If we only had enough postage to send one piece of your writing to the U.K., which piece would you choose to send? Why?
4. Have you received any response to anything you have written? If so, what was it like? How did it make you feel?
5. Whose writing from the U.K. have you read? Which pieces did you like? Why? Which pieces do you remember? Why?

SECOND INTERVIEW WITH THE STUDENTS

General Questions

Evaluating the Exchange

1. How has the exchange been going for you since the last time we spoke?

Exchange Audience

1. Have you learned anything new about the U.K. audience? (Asked only if new writing has been received from the U.K. since the first interview). If so, what?

2. At what point did you learn that the most recent piece you completed was going to be sent to the U.K.? Is there anything that you would do differently to this piece if it had not been sent to the U.K.? (And where students had a choice from among several to send, ask why they decided to send the piece that they did.)

3. When you wrote your last piece to the U.K., who was the reader in your head? (e.g., yourself, your teacher, an individual U.K. student, a group of individuals, the whole U.K. class?)

Writing-Based Questions (to be asked about the most recent piece sent for the exchange)

The student again reads the piece and recalls his or her process. Then the Writing-Based, Process and Product Questions asked in the FIRST INTERVIEW WITH THE STUDENTS are repeated except Product Question #3.

THIRD INTERVIEW WITH THE STUDENTS

General Questions

Evaluating the Exchange

1. How has the exchange gone for you this school year?
2. Do you have a general comment or impression of the exchange for the year?

Writing-Based Questions

Students were shown two portfolios of writing--one containing their exchange writing for the year and the other containing the writing of one of the U.K. students. In classes where there were writing partners, as in Logan's and Davis's, the U.K. partners' writings were used; in the classes where no formal pairs were established, U.K. focals' writings were used.

U.K. Writing Process

1. In reviewing the U.K. writing, what are your impressions of the U.K. students?
2. From their writing, what do you think their year was like for them in school? Out of school?
3. What do you imagine the U.K. students did to complete their writing for the exchange?
4. How do you think their teacher introduced the idea of writing to the U.S.?
5. Where do you think they got their ideas? Who do you imagine helped them with their writing?

U.K. Writing Product

1. Over the course of the entire year, what pieces of writing that your class has received from the U.K. stand out most vividly in your mind? Why?
2. Have you written back about the writing you have received? Why did (or didn't) you write back? What kinds of things did you say? Did you write to one

person or the group? Why that person in particular?

3. What is the most recent piece that your class has received from the U.K.? Can you describe it? What did your class do the day it was received? How did your teacher present it to you? How did the students react? What did they do? Whose papers did you see?

4. How is the writing that you have received different from the writing that you have sent? How is it similar?

Processes

1. With respect to your writing, how did this past year go? In school? Out of school?

2. Looking at your writing for the exchange across the year, what did you do to complete your writing?

3. How did your teacher introduce the idea of writing to the U.K.?

4. Where did you get your ideas? Who helped you with your writing?

Products

1. Over the course of the entire year, what pieces of writing that you wrote stand out most vividly in your mind? Why?

2. Have you received any response from the U.K. to anything you sent? Why did (or didn't) you write back? What kinds of things did you say?

3. Have you noticed any changes in your writing this year? What are they? What do you think caused those changes?

4. Which piece of your writing, do you think, best shows the kinds of changes you are talking about? In what ways is this piece different from your autobiography, which you wrote very early in the year (if the student chooses the autobiograpy, ask the student to compare it to a later piece and ask why the student thinks what he or she wrote early on was his or her best)?

5. Are there any pieces that you do not like? Why?

6. How has your view of the U.K. students changed over the course of the year? Do you think that your views of

them have affected your writing? How?

General Student Goals

1. Do you think you have changed over the year--not just as a writer but as a student? Have you changed academically? Socially?
2. What do you want to do when you finish school?
3. What do you see as your own personal goals as a writer for the writing that you will do in the future?
4. Have you received anything personally? From whom? How do you feel about it?
5. How is the writing that you have received different from the writing that you have sent? How is it similar?

Appendix 3

Response as Evaluation

I Liked your Name Paper, it was so very neat and very Informative.

Response as Personal Communication

Well enough about me you must be getting bored especially if you've read my autobiagraphy. I like all the drawings you put in you're autobiagraphy you seem like a very artistic person. I hope you enjoyed this letter and learned something about me in the process. As I learned about you through your autobiagraphy. Hopefully you will write back to me in my home and in my school.

Response as Extending Experience

I think you are very lucky to have gone to France even though you did hurt yourself very badly. I really want to go to France. Acually I would like to go alot of places all over the world.

It was interesting to read about your "MOST FRIGHTENING MOMENT." I just had a similar experience when i tried out for the play! I'm not very musical so I don't play an instrument but the clarinet sounds cool! Actually I once tried to play the piano but lets just say it didn't work out!

Response as Reiteration and Clarification

Dear Kenneth,
I was glad you like my paper. My nickname is "Torch". I wasn't sure if you understood that or not. I got the name from the game of Dungeons and Dragons. We used to have the show Dungeons and Dragons on tv here but not any more.

Dear Susanna,
I guess my mother calls me space kadet because they begin with my initals. I'm really not some weirdo kid who goes around staring into space all the time.

Response as Apology

As you can see this letter is alot shorter than my other
letter. My next letter will be much longer and I hope I
won't bore you with it.
Hope to hear from
you soon.
Love,
Leabow x

Response as Correction

He shouldn't write siad Joe or said Mick as often as he did. The way he wrote it made it hard to follow.

Appendix 4

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2SW · Response Letters

Kate C. Jan 1988

Students from America have obviously spent a long time writing interesting work specifically for you to read. It would be nice for them to receive a letter from you where you show that not only have you read their work but you have thought about it too

IDEAS FOR YOUR RESPONSE LETTERS

- The first thing you need to do is read their work carefully so that you know what you are talking about. Eg: LETTERS
  SPOOKY TALES
  AUTOBIOGRAPHIES

- WRITE a response letter to your person and include what reading their work
  - i. made you think about
  - ii. made you talk about
  - iii. made you curious about
  - iv. made you want to write about something similar.

- ORGANIZATION – you could divide your responses like this:

– LETTER – Start off by thanking them and then answering any questions that they asked you. Maybe you could put forward your views about the project and how it's going and ask for their views likes/dislikes / – pluses/minuses etc.

– SPOOKY TALES – You could write about what you particularly liked about their tale.
– What your own most spooky time was
– Talk about your attitude towards Horror stories / films. Which ones have you read seen? Do you have any favourites? If so which ones and why.

– AUTOBIOGRAPHIES – Which parts were you most interested in.
– Any questions? Anything you want to know more about.
– Choose maybe 3 or 4 parts and talk about:

- any similar experiences ... What these made you think about from your life.

– Did their Autobiographies raise anything that you had not written about that you could write now. Eg How do you see your life in 25 years' time

Please work in rough first and take your time responding to their work. They have worked hard – it would be nice for them to have some thoughtful and positive responses!

Appendix 5

Letters to London get English class involved in study

By Jim Beaver
Staff writer

EL SOBRANTE — Demone Anderson has had pen pals before, but not an entire class full.

"I've never done anything like it before," said Anderson, a 14-year-old freshman at De Anza High School.

Anderson and his classmates in Susan Reed's English I class are part of a program that has them exchanging letters with a school class in London, England. Reed said the letter exchange has excited her students in a way few classroom techniques do.

"It's given them a vested interest" in writing, she said.

Instead of having their writing assignments disappear, to be handed back days or weeks later with a grade affixed, the students' letters produce an in-kind response from teen-agers across the Atlantic Ocean.

> **'The kind of writing kids do in school is artificial and stifling . . . We wanted to set up a situation where they would care about what they're writing'**
> — Sarah Freedman, UC-Berkeley

The De Anza students are one of five Bay Area high school classes participating in the program. Each is paired with a class of the same age group in England.

Although it may be the most beneficial effect, encouraging students to write is not the only motive for the program. Sarah Freedman, a professor of education at UC-Berkeley, will compile the letters for a study of the differences in the way writing is taught and learned in the United States and England.

"The kind of writing kids do in school is artificial and stifling," Freedman said. "They're mainly writing for a teacher and a grade and not communicating anything. We wanted to set up a situation where they would care about what they're writing."

Reed agrees. Based on the students' response to the letter writing, she said, she has vowed not to request any "meaningless assignments that are just for me if they can write for an audience."

The first batch of letters discussed life at the respective schools. Students divided the subject into components that included classwork, sports, social activity and their daily routine.

When the first letters came from England, Reed handed them out to different students so they could make their replies more personal.

Nanami Hamilton and Ymeesha Shelton, both 14, responded to an English student named Jason, who wanted to know about sunny California, the girls who live here and how many channels we get on TV. The girls said they wrote about parties, pep rallies, popular dance steps and shoe styles.

And they had to tell Jason it wasn't always sunny in California.

Some universal themes emerged. Anderson said one letter from England complained about school food.

Anderson has written to pen pals before, including one in South Africa with whom has he corresponded since the sixth grade. But this project is unlike anything he has done before, he said.

"This is better than any other English class," he said. "It's a good experience."

Reed said the letters have helped foster a sense of trust among the students. They proofread one another's efforts and are even willing to read their letters aloud to hear how they sound, she said.

"We've talked about what we want people to know," Reed said. "The letters are planned out and revised instead of the first draft being the final draft."

Because of their experience, she said, her students will learn to "write letters for jobs, to politicians, to grandparents."

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West County Times
Nov 15 1987

Appendix 6

Teaching
In The
90's

A Revolution *of* Rising Expectations

By Lynn Olson

DONAL F. HOLWAY

Most teachers spend their days closeted away in their classrooms, taking their marching orders from the central office. But the classroom door has opened to admit the first strains of reform, and some teachers are beginning to march to a different drummer.

When Tom Buschek began teaching 22 years ago, someone handed him a roll book and a reading list and pointed to his classroom door. After that, he was alone. "They told you what to teach," he recalls, "but they didn't tell you how." Like most teachers, Buschek learned how the hard way. Today, he is using what he has learned to ease the way for others. As a "teaching colleague" in the Pittsburgh Public Schools, the 44-year-old social studies teacher divides his time between teaching students and working to improve the skills of educators like himself. He also conducts research, prepares instructional materials for use by other teachers in the district, and observes and assists his peers. This fall, he will be working with student teachers from area universities who come to Pittsburgh for training.

Buschek's job description is far from typical. It marks a shift away from the top-down management of the past to a new arrangement of shared power. After a decade in which teachers took the blame for the "rising tide of mediocrity" in the nation's schools, leaders of the reform movement are now looking to teachers to turn the tide. The way to do that is summed up, increasingly, in two words: teacher empowerment. For most educators, who still spend their time behind closed doors, empowerment is just a buzz word. Their duties remain much the same, whether they have taught for three years or 30. And they have little to say about what happens in the school as a whole. But Buschek is one of a growing number of teachers who are breaking out of that mold. From Pittsburgh to San Diego, from Indianapolis to Miami, educators are assuming greater responsibility for the performance of their peers, promoting new approaches to teaching and learning, and making decisions about school policies and programs.

"It is far too early to say whether teacher empowerment will ultimately improve schools, whether those teachers who acquire and exercise influence will be able and committed enough to make it work to the benefit of children," says

JOHN NATION

Fifteen years ago Linda Shelor left the public schools. But the new options for teachers in Louisville have brought her back.

tion to the verbal and logical skills stressed in schools, these include musical intelligence, spatial intelligence, the ability to use the body in highly skilled ways, and a well-developed understanding of one's self and others.

The Key School is an example of changes in teaching and learning that began at the school rather than being mandated from the district. Eight Indianapolis teachers came up with the idea for the new magnet school and convinced the district to fund it.

The Key School curriculum is tied together by themes, which span all grades and subjects and change every 12 weeks. At the beginning of last year, for example, students focused on the connections between people and their environment. At the end of the 12 weeks, students produced projects of their own design that illustrate the theme.

Four days a week, children gather for part of the day in small, multi-age classes that emphasize work in a particular cognitive area. They also can participate in such after-school electives as photography, computer graphics, and gymnastics. Starting this fall, the school will move to an ungraded structure throughout the school day.

At the Central Park East Secondary School in New York City, teachers created a program from scratch, based on the ideas of educator Theodore Sizer. Students' days are divided into large time blocks, such as a two-hour class in humanities or math and science. If students want to take a foreign language, they come for an hour before school begins. If they want to participate in extracurricular activities, such as dance or computers, they stay on after the school day ends. All students take the same core curriculum, although they may read about a topic from different sources, based on their abilities.

The course of study is built around central themes, chosen by the teachers. Within the school, students are assigned to "houses" of approximately 80 youngsters each, so that teachers and students have a chance to know each other. Students also gather once a day in "advisory groups" of up to 15 teenagers, where they can discuss topics ranging from current events to test-taking. Instead of standing at the front of the room lecturing, teachers "coach" students on how to pursue their own learning.

Michael Goldman, a former humanities teacher at the school, says the small classes and advisory groups make it possible for teachers to do "a lot of talking one-on-one with children. I can't see where else you could walk around and talk to kids individually."

Conducting Research

TEACHING THE AT-RISK IN CALIFORNIA

Several years ago, University of California at Los Angeles professor Rhona Weinstein was worried that the low expectations teachers held for students were limiting achievement. Based on her research, she identified eight factors that might help students succeed, such as flexible grouping patterns, an emphasis on more challenging tasks, and cooperative learning strategies that enable youngsters to work together. But Weinstein knew she couldn't bring about such changes in schools without the help of teachers. "There was no way we could prescribe a curriculum and ask teachers to implement it," she recalls. "Teachers and administrators, working with us, would have to help create ways to use this research in the classroom. We would need to learn from teachers' expertise and they would need to learn from us."

"If you have schools where people lack basic things like textbooks and paper—just the basic materials that they need to carry out instruction—then proposals to involve them in decisionmaking" may not seem to make very much sense.

—Thomas Corcoran, researcher

She found an ally in Joan Cone, an English teacher at El Cerrito High School who was taking one of Weinstein's classes. The urban teacher asked the psychologist to work with a group of educators at the school to make learning more effective for its lowest performing 9th graders.

Teachers and researchers met once a week for two hours to discuss research, observe their practice, and design alternative teaching techniques. Some teachers agreed to share the teaching of a group of struggling 9th grade students so that instruction would be consistent from class to class. Then they began to change the way they taught.

Teachers asked students to write on a daily basis. They required them to read at home for 15 to 30 minutes a night, five nights a week. They read aloud to youngsters. They gave them books such as George Orwell's *Animal Farm* and Elie Weisel's *Night*—books that had once been reserved for honors classes. They encouraged students to participate in extracurricular activities. And they planned lessons around the students' own interests.

Teachers also made regular phone calls to parents, sent home newsletters about classroom activities, and held small conferences with groups of mothers and fathers. They complimented students as often as possible, reinforced the same demands from one class to the next, and tried to incorporate conflict-management techniques into their teaching that would help students cope more constructively with anger and frustration. Throughout all this, the teachers kept detailed notes of their meetings, completed surveys of their beliefs and practices as they changed over time, and kept track of students' learning. Last year, they presented their findings at the annual meeting of educational researchers—the American Educational Research Association.

Since then, they have taken their project on the road by helping teachers at other schools in the Richmond Unified School District understand and carry out the lessons learned from their research.

Ninth graders in the program had better grades in English and history than a comparable group of students from previous years. They had fewer disciplinary referrals. And they were less likely to leave or transfer out of the school. Some students even advanced into higher tracks within the school. Others received college-preparatory credit for classes that were once considered remedial.

Michelle Mehlhorn, one of the teachers involved in the project, says she used to distrust educational research. "I may have been typical of teachers in that I was often too busy or skeptical to pay attention to research until its results were so obvious they could not be ignored," she recalls.

Now Mehlhorn and her colleagues are research fans. Research has been the basis for reforms at El Cerrito High. It has also been a way to bring teachers together.

"The four teachers who have been involved in this project from the beginning feel very close," says Cone. "We don't feel alone anymore. We don't feel as if we're voices crying in the wilderness. When we started this project, it was about kids," she adds with a laugh. "And what we know now is that it's about us."

Despite such success stories, expansions in teachers' roles and responsibilities are not widespread. "There are still a small number of places that are engaged in the real process of change," says Albert Shanker, president of the American Federation of Teachers. "I'm disappointed with the pace at which things are moving."

One problem is the lack of incentives for teachers and school administrators to alter long-entrenched practices. Traditionally, educators have been rewarded for maintaining the status quo rather than for venturing in new directions.

In inner cities, in particular, teachers lack basic supplies that would make more ambitious reforms possible. A study conducted last year of urban teachers found that many were struggling with inadequate resources, substandard facilities, and a lack of support that would not be tolerated in other professions. Says the study's director, Thomas Corcoran: "If you have schools where people lack basic things like textbooks and paper—just the basic materials that they need to carry out instruction—then proposals to involve them in decisionmaking" may not seem very immediate.

Time is another major problem in schools. Teachers complain that they already are overworked without taking on additional responsibilities. But so far, no one has restructured schools in a way that gives teachers more time to perform their new roles. Instead, most schools have asked teachers to take on new tasks without relieving them of the old ones. "I think it's one

CINDY CHARLES

Like many teachers, Joan Cone (left) used to doubt the value of education research. Now, she's using that research to help her classroom come alive.

thing to expect my colleagues to change," comments Buschek of Pittsburgh. "But they have to be given the tools. There are far too many teachers who are overloaded with clerical work, large classes, and poorly disciplined students."

To make matters worse, many teachers have grown accustomed to a narrowly defined view of their roles. Adam Urbanski, president of the Rochester Teachers Association, says, "Teachers tend to teach the way they have been taught. Deep down inside, teachers—like the general public—hold suspect any school that does not resemble the school that they remember. We are victims of our own experiences," he sighs. "And that, I think, is the biggest obstacle."

As part of a new union contract in Rochester, teachers have agreed to take on many new responsibilities—such as counseling and peer evaluation—in exchange for higher pay. Senior teachers in the district eventually could earn up to $70,000 per year. But they would have to teach wherever they are needed in the school system. They also would have to be more accountable for their school's results.

Urbanski says that although many teachers have agreed to the changes in theory, others are still resistant. And reforms within individual schools are not coming easily.

Even when teachers are given the opportunity to radically alter the way schools operate, they may focus on the day-to-day details of lunchroom duty and hall monitoring rather than on more fundamental changes in instruction.

Those teachers who do want to change may find themselves hemmed in by education's reliance on standardized tests and simplistic learning measures. "How can we encourage teachers to cultivate professional judgments if we're going to hand them a basal reader, say 'teach to the test,' and so on?" asks Michigan State professor Gary Sykes. "That drives out the potential for alternatives." As long as teachers are held accountable in ways they distrust, experts suggest, they're unlikely to venture far outside the classroom.

What's more, teachers and administrators who take risks need to know that the school district is firmly behind them. Because, assuredly, there will be some failures. Experience shows that a real sea change in schools requires not only support and diligence, but a willingness to stumble and fall that extends from the statehouse to the classroom. So far many states, districts, and teachers have been tentative about taking that first, frightening step. But while change is slow, painful, and uneven, at least some people contend that there is no turning back. "The most powerful revolutions are revolutions of rising expectations," says Rochester's Urbanski. Clearly, some teachers have raised their sights and their aspirations beyond their individual classrooms. The question now is whether others will join them to transform teaching into a true profession. ■

Lynn Olson is a senior editor of Education Week.